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VOLUME 1 CHAPTER 4

TSUKIKAGE BABY

BY KODAMA YUKI

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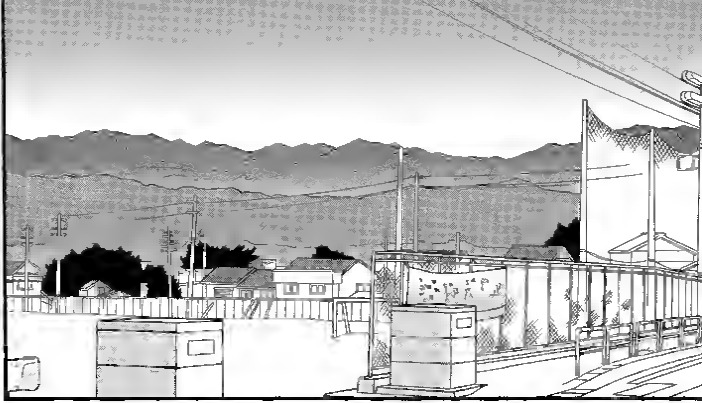
CHAPTER 4

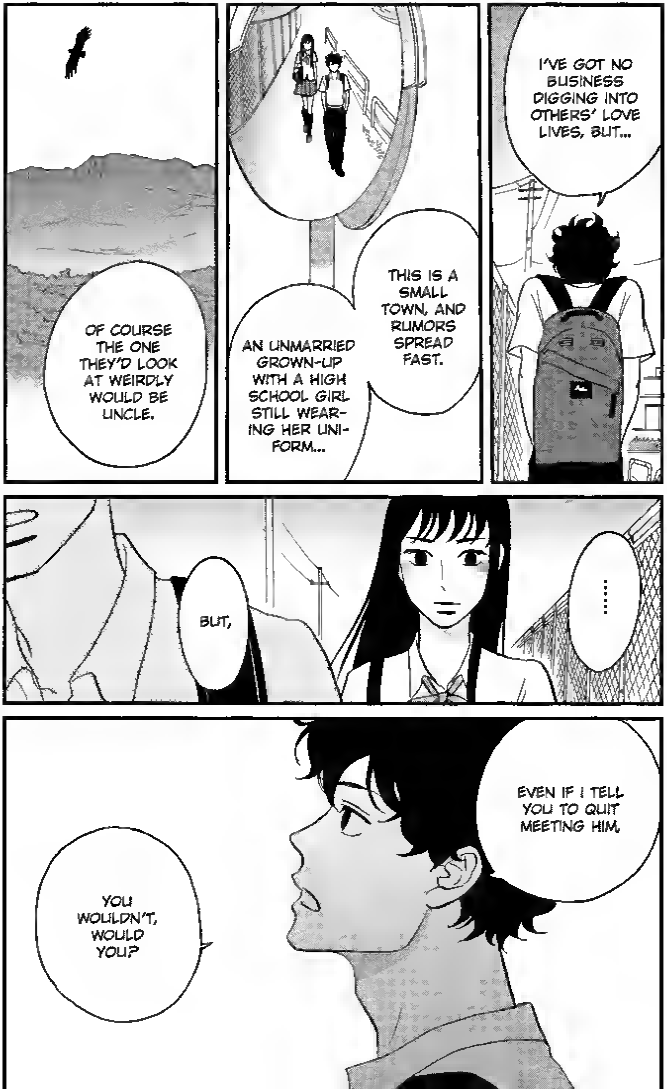


I...
I'LL HAVE YOU KNOW.
I ALREADY HAVE SOMEONE I LIKE, SO...

I KNOW.
I GET THAT MUCH.
THE ONE YOU LIKE IS UNCLE MADOKA.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN COVER?!
WHY DO YOU AND I HAVE TO--?!

...WHA--
WHAT'S WITH THAT?
IF YOU KNOW, THEN...
YOU MUST'VE REALIZED THIS ALREADY.
EH?
IF YOU GET TOO CLOSE TO UNCLE,
WHAT D'YOU SUPPOSE OTHERS WILL THINK ABOUT HIM?
PEOPLE ALL OVER THE NEIGHBORHOOD HAVE BEEN GOSSIPING.
THAT YOU AND UNCLE BEING ALL BUDDY-BUDDY WAS FISHY.


I'VE GOT NO BUSINESS DIGGING INTO OTHERS' LOVE LIVES, BUT...
THIS IS A SMALL TOWN, AND RUMORS SPREAD FAST.
AN UNMARRIED GROWN-UP WITH A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL STILL WEARING HER UNIFORM...
OF COURSE THE ONE THEY'D LOOK AT WEIRDLY WOULD BE UNCLE.
.....
BUT,
EVEN IF I TELL YOU TO QUIT MEETING HIM,
YOU WOULDN'T, WOULD YOU?

THAT'S WHY,
IF YOU SAY YOU'RE GOING OUT WITH ME,
YOU GOING TO UNCLE'S SHOP WOULD STOP LOOKING SO FISHY.
THAT PLACE'S PRETTY MUCH MY SECOND HOME, ANYWAY.
THAT'S WHAT I MEANT BY
BEING YOUR COVER.

YOU CAN LEAVE THAT TO ME.
I'LL TELL UNCLE ABOUT EVERY-THING.
OH!
THEN EVEN MADO-KA-KUN WILL...
IF WE USE GOING OUT AS A COVER,
...HEY.
I UNDER-STAND WHAT YOU'RE SAYING, BUT...
UH.
WELL, I'LL MAKE SURE TO CHOOSE MY WORDS CAREFULLY, SO...
YOU BETTER NOT SAY ANYTHING WEIRD!
WHA--?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN 'EVERY-THING'?!
YOU GONNA PLAY ALONG WITH MY PLAN,
SO, WHICH IS IT?
IF IT GETS TOO OUT OF HAND, IT'LL JUST BE A BURDEN FOR HIM.
UNTIL THE RUMORS HAVE QUIETED DOWN A BIT, YOU TRY AND HOLD YOURSELF BACK FROM MEET-ING WITH UNCLE TOO MUCH.
ANYWAY, AS FOR WHAT'S GOING ON NOW,

LET'S BE CLEAR HERE.
I'M JUST TRYING TO KEEP UNCLE'S NAME CLEAR.
OR JUST KEEP ON BEING A BOTHER TO UNCLE?
IF YOU REALLY GET IT, HURRY UP AND CHOOSE.
BUT...
YOU...
LIKE THIS,

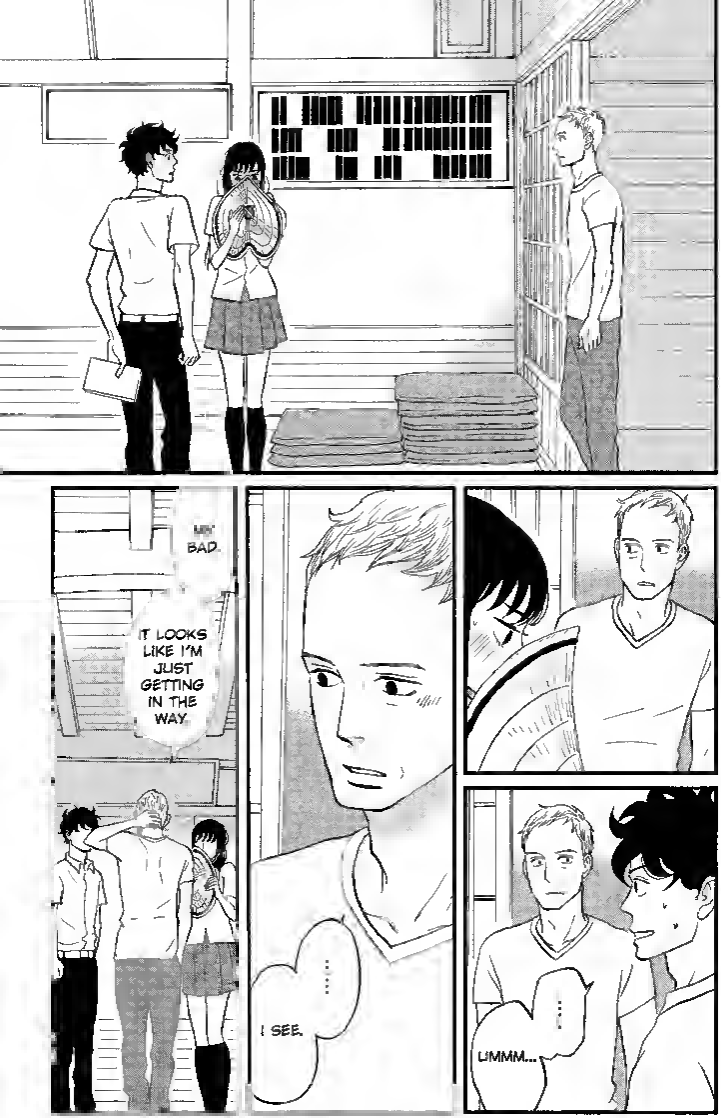
I DON'T EVEN HAVE THIS MUCH INTEREST IN YOU, SO...
YOU CAN REST ASSURED.
ALRIGHT.

I'LL PLAY ALONG
WITH YOUR STORY.
'KAY, THEN.
SO, IN COMMEMORATION OF THE NEW COUPLE,
WANNA GO ON A DATE?

T/N: Lyrics from the Etchu Owara, a song performed at the festival, used as meaningless words for rhythm.

FIRST, EXHALE WHILE BENDING YOUR NECK FORWARD.
MAKE SURE TO DO AS I SAY.
Exhale
HOLD YOUR BREATH FOR 5-6 SECONDS, AND THEN SLOWLY DO IT AGAIN.
...WHAT?
NO QUESTIONS. JUST DO IT.
IT'S SOMETHING LIKE A CHARM.
Book: Methods for Overcoming Stage Fright
CLATTER
Inhale
BEND YOUR NECK BACKWARD WHILE EXHALING...
RIGHT. NOW, THIS TIME,
CLATTER
.....
OKAY.

!!
UNCLE...
EH?
NO, I MEAN,
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
WHAT'RE YOU DOING HERE?
I JUST CAME TO PICK UP SOMETHING I FORGOT.
WHY'RE YOU--
...HUH?
HIKARU?


UH, BAD.
IT LOOKS LIKE I'M JUST GETTING IN THE WAY.
I SEE.
UMMM...

THAT'S NOT IT!!
...EH?
SO... LET ME GET THIS STRAIGHT.
THE TWO OF YOU WANTED TO BE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE WHILE PRACTICING YOUR DANCING,
BUT WHEN THERE ARE OTHERS AROUND, YOU CAN'T REALLY DO THAT?
YEAH... WELL...
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
THIS IS IMPOSSIBLE...
PFFT.

EEEHHH?
PEOPLE LIKE BEING NOSY, SO
RATHER THAN HAVE THEM MISUNDERSTAND WE DID THE SAME THING YOU'RE DOING.
I GUESS WE'RE ALL ON THE SAME PAGE AT THAT POINT.
I DID THE SAME THING,
Y'KNOW. WHEN I WAS IN HIGH SCHOOL.
?
THAT BRINGS ME BACK TO THE GOOD DAYS.
HUH?
THIS IS JUST SPECIAL TRAINING UNTIL SHE CAN LEARN TO DANCE PROPERLY.
SO, DO YOU GUYS DANCE WITH A GROUP?
OR IS IT FOR THE SPORTS FESTIVAL?
NOPE. NUH-UH.

...AH.
THERE'S NO WAY HOTARUKO DOESN'T KNOW THE OWARA...
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING?
.....
.....
UNCLE?
COME TO THINK OF IT, I NEVER HAVE SEEN HER DO IT.
HUH. SO, SHE DOESN'T KNOW HOW TO DANCE?

WHA--? UNCLE, WHAT DO YOU--
HEY.
SORRY FOR GET-TING IN THE WAY.
ENOUGH OF THAT.
LET'S GET BACK TO PRACTICE.

UNCLE,
I HATE IT WHEN PEOPLE HIDE THINGS FROM ME.
WHY ARE YOU HIDING IT?!
AND RIGHT NOW, THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT YOU'RE DOING.
CLATTER
CLATTER
SLIDE
UNCLE!
I'LL LISTEN TO ANY-THING YOU HAVE TO SAY, SO AT LEAST ANSWER ME!

HEY.
AM I WEARING THE KASA CORRECTLY?
LOWER.
THE ANGLE NEEDS TO BE LOWER.
...Y'KNOW WHAT?
I'LL JUST ASK IT STRAIGHT.
EXACTLY WHAT KIND OF RELATIONSHIP DO YOU HAVE WITH HIM?

DO YOU REALLY WANT ME TO SAY IT?
IF MADOKA-KUN WON'T SAY ANY-THING, THEN I WON'T SAY ANYTHING EITHER.
THAT'S WHAT I'VE DECIDED.
...
I WON'T SAY ANY-THING.
flip
NO...
WAIT A SEC!

THIS SECRET ISN'T MINE TO SHARE.
.....
WHAT'S WITH THAT...
Click
IT'S YOUR UNCLE'S.

I'M STARTING, SO WATCH CAREFULLY
that he won't tell even me.
A secret...

Where has he been and what has he done?
A side of Uncle I don't know...
under that kasa?
What's this girl hiding

HEY, LOOK THERE.
SAEKI'S SPACING OUT AGAIN.
HE KEPT STARING AT MINEGISHI ALL THROUGHOUT BREAK
I MEAN, SHE'S PROBABLY THE FIRST GIRL HE'S FALLEN FOR.
AAH--
RIGHT NOW, SHE'S PROBABLY AN ANGEL IN HIS EYES.
STAAARE
SAEKI.
Gloom
UNCLE
Depressed

OH CRAP.
GET A HOLD OF YOURSELF ALREADY.
TODAY'S THE COMBINED PRACTICE...
AH.
WHY HAVE YOU BEEN SPACING OUT SINCE MORNING?
THE COMBINED PRACTICE IS TODAY, AND WE'RE REPRESENTING OUR CLASS. WE'LL BE DANCING IN FRONT OF EVERYONE, SO WE CAN'T SCREW THIS UP.
THAT IF I'M TOLD TO DANCE, THEN I'LL DANCE.
YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO,
I'M FINE.
IT'S NUTHIN'
AAARGH...
WHAT ARE YOU--
DON'T GIVE ME THAT!

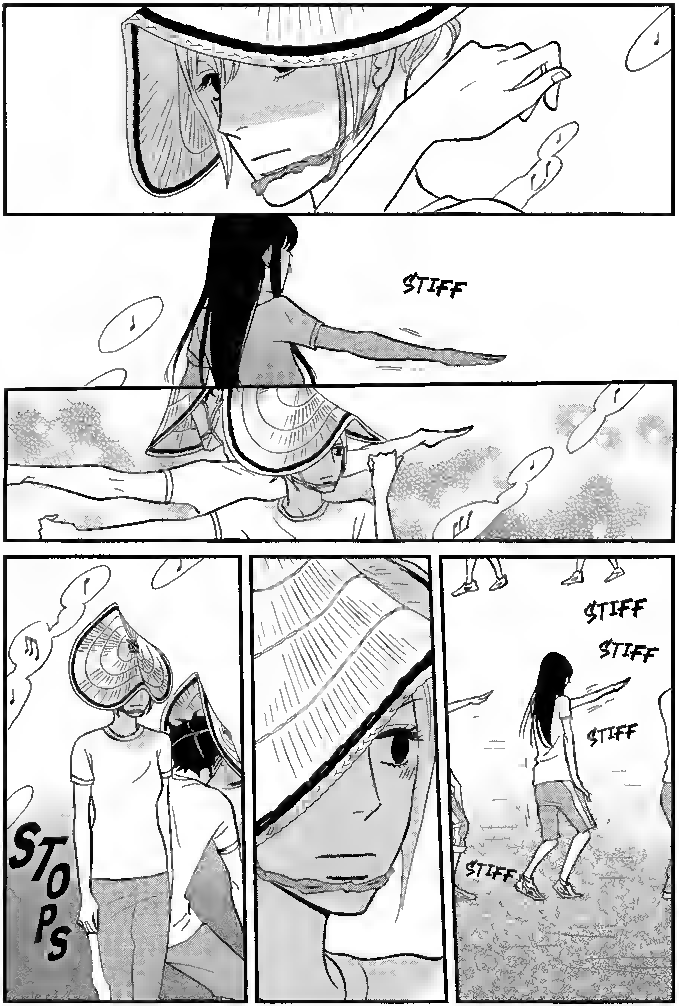
STR
IKE
THAT'S THE KIND OF GUY I AM.

WAAAH!
SAEKI AND RIO DANCING TOGETHER REALLY HAS PRESENCE.
THEY'RE PRETTY EXPERIENCED, SO EVEN WITH THAT LITTLE SPACE BETWEEN THEM, THEIR BREATHS ARE TOTALLY IN SYNC.
THEY'RE BOTH GOOD INDIVIDUALLY, SO WHEN YOU PUT THEM TOGETHER, THIS HAPPENS.
I WANT TO BE LIKE THEM!

I WISH IT WERE ALREADY THE SPORTS FESTIVAL!
I WANNA SEE THEM DANCING IN KIMONOS!
IF IT'S THOSE TWO, THEN IT'S SURE TO BE REALLY PRETTY!
--PFFT!

Pppt!
THAT'S TOTALLY NO GOOD.
COMPARED TO THE TWO ON STAGE,
I CAN'T HELP BUT LAUGH AT THAT.
KU KU KU
STIFF
STIFF
WHAT IS IT?
NAH, SORRY.
THAT THING FROM THE OTHER CLASS CAME INTO MY LINE OF SIGHT, THAT'S ALL.
--which reminds me,
STIFF
STIFF
STIFF
STIFF
is her.
I'll be okay, but...
the one that really worries me

DAMN IT...
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
IS IT BECAUSE THERE'S A LOT OF PEOPLE?
SHE'S MOVING LIKE A ROBOT AGAIN.
STIFF
STIFF
STIFF
AND HERE I THOUGHT SHE'D FINALLY LOOSENED UP.
THE RESULTS OF THE SPECIAL TRAINING AREN'T SHOWING AT ALL.
I WISH THIS WILL BE OVER SOON...
It must be tough on her, too...
She gave her best in practice.


STIFF
STOPS
STIFF
STIFF
STIFF
STIFF

HEY!
HEY, WHERE ARE YOU...?
...EH?
STEP
STEP
STEP
Stare
Stare
Stare
Stare

MINEGISHI-SAN,
HOW LONG ARE YOU GONNA KEEP UP THIS ACT?
YOU'RE ACTUALLY REALLY GOOD AT DANCING, AREN'T YOU?
RIO-CHAN, WHAT'S UP WITH THIS?
WHAT KIND OF KICK ARE YOU GETTING OUT OF PRE-TENDING TO BE BAD?
ARE YOU MAKING FUN OF US?
whisper
Stare

IF YOU DON'T WANNA TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY,
THEN JUST DISAPPEAR.
YOU'RE NOTHING BUT AN EYESORE.
Hotaruko!

yoshiwara
TRANSLATOR

EDITOR(S)
Megan (cleans)
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badzphoto
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VOLUME 1 CHAPTER 5

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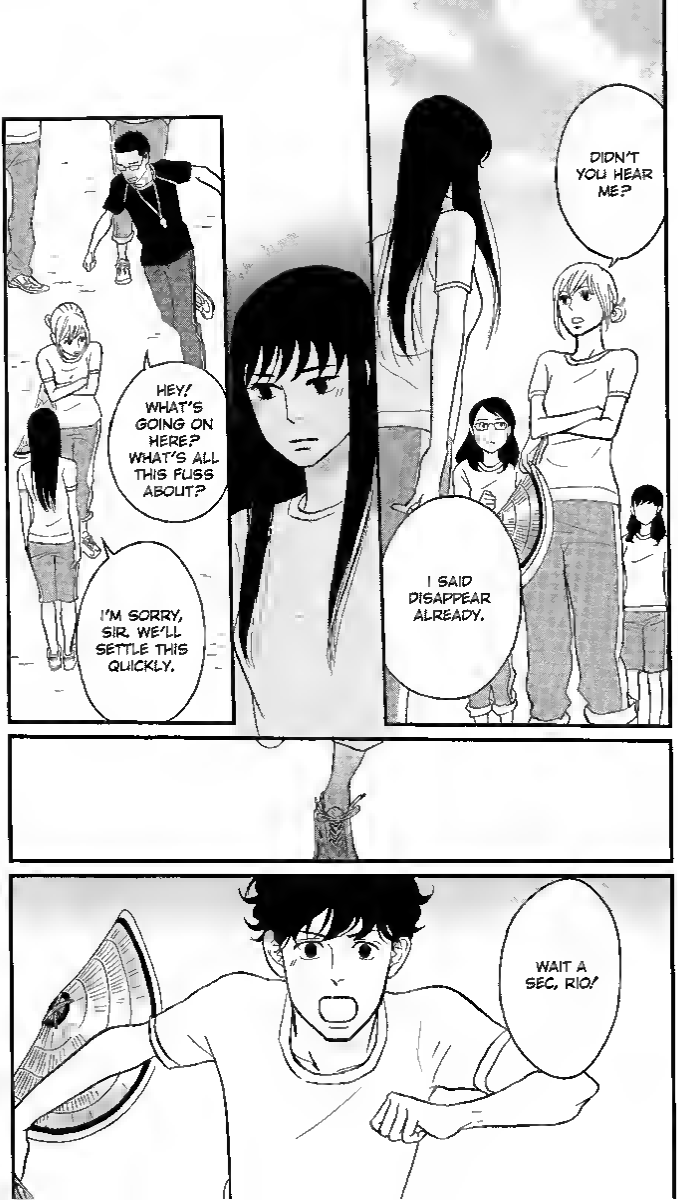
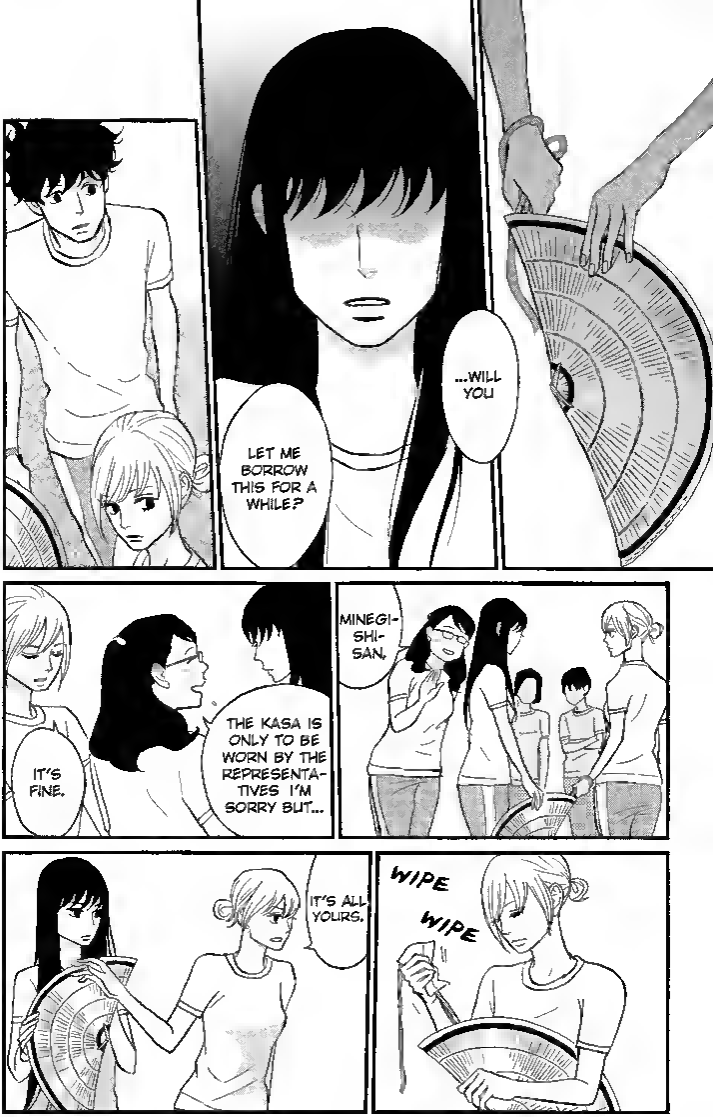
CHAPTER 5


DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME?
I SAID DISAPPEAR ALREADY.
HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? WHAT'S ALL THIS FUSS ABOUT?
I'M SORRY, SIR. WE'LL SETTLE THIS QUICKLY.
WAIT A SEC, RIO!

...HMPH.
SHE'S SERIOUSLY TRYING HER BEST.
SHE ISN'T SCREWING AROUND.
Pant
IF THAT'S HER BEST,
THEN SHE'S JUST ALL KINDS OF PATHETIC, ISN'T SHE?
YOU'RE CALLING THAT CRAPPY EXCUSE OF A DANCE THE OWARA?

YOU MUST'VE HAD ONE RIDICULOUSLY HORRIBLE INSTRUCTOR.
MINEGISHI-SAN, I'M SORRY.
AS LONG AS YOU'RE TAKING THIS SERIOUSLY, IT'S FINE.
YOU'RE NOT THE ONE WHO'S IN THE WRONG.
LISTEN HERE, RIO...
I GOT IT, I GOT IT.
SHE'S REALLY--

OKAY, LET'S GET BACK ON STAGE, SAEKI.
WHAT.

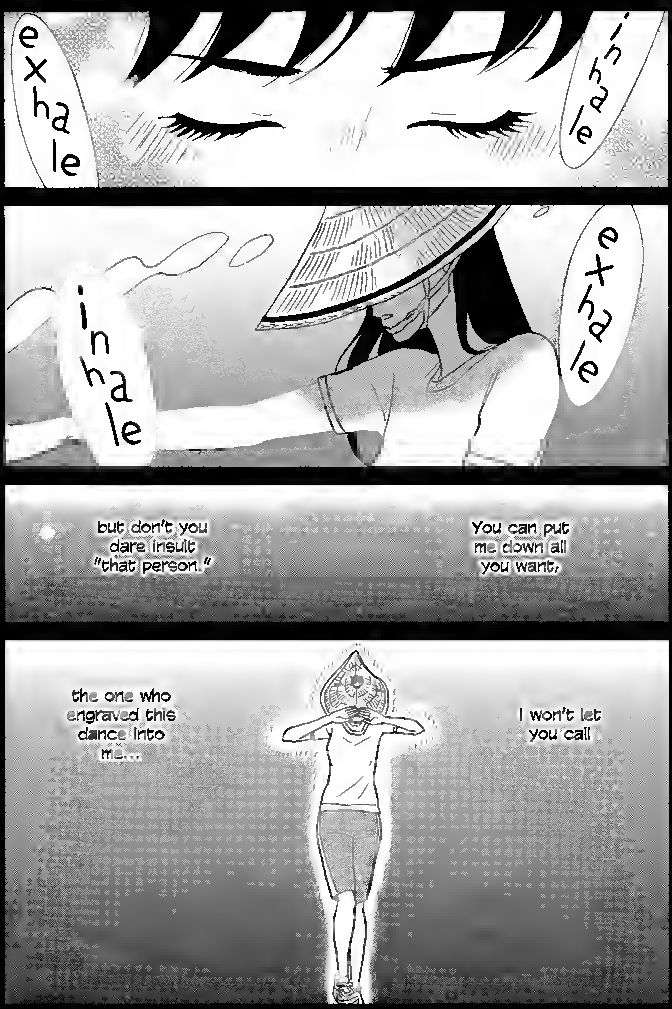

LET ME BORROW THIS FOR A WHILE?
...WILL YOU
MINEGI-SHI-SAN,
THE KASA IS ONLY TO BE WORN BY THE REPRESENTA-TIVES I'M SORRY BUT...
IT'S FINE.
IT'S ALL YOURS.
WIPE
WIPE

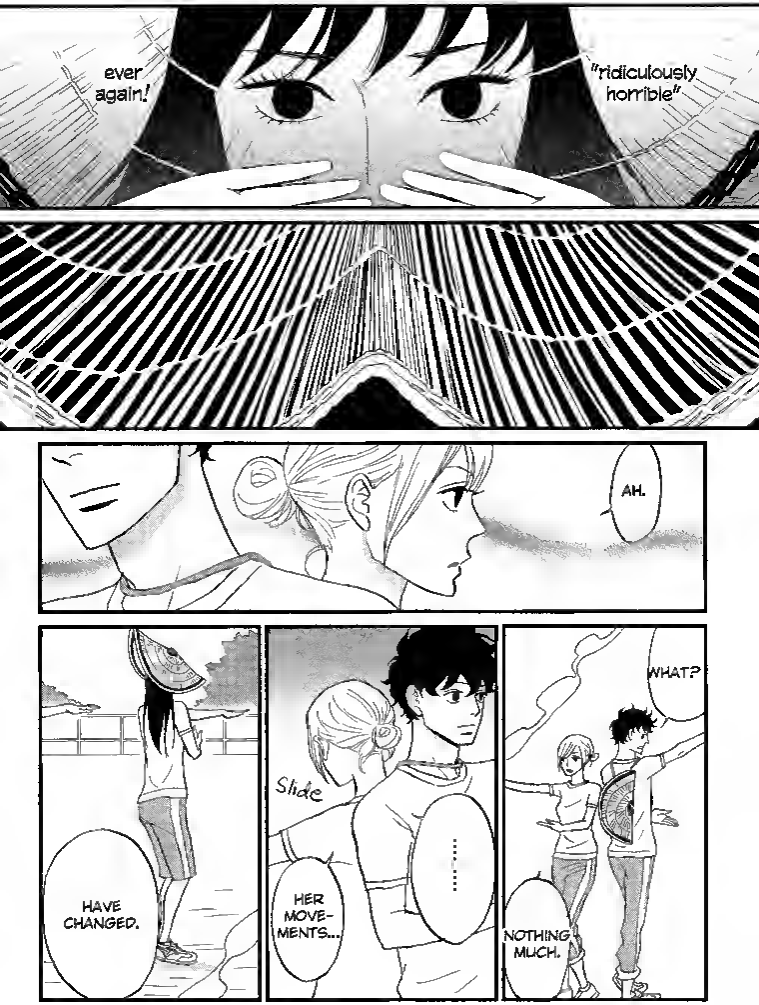
inhale
YOU OKAY?
H-HEY.
breathe
exhale
...HEY,
HOTARUKO.

WE'RE RESUMING PRACTICE!
HEY, COME ON NOW! DON'T CROWD! GET BACK IN LINE!
UM, SIR,
IS IT OKAY IF I DANCE HERE INSTEAD?
ME, TOO.
inhale
exhale
inhale

Clap
Clap
Clap
Clap
IS THAT GIRL
REALLY GONNA BE OKAY?
DOES WEARING THE KASA REALLY MAKE THAT MUCH OF A DIFFER-ENCE?

IN FACT, SHE'S JUST STANDING OUT EVEN MORE!
IT'S TOTALLY NOT WORKING!
AH, CRAP... SHE'S GONNA GET TRAUMATIZED AT THIS RATE.
Aaah!
STIFF
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
HAH
"ONE RIDICULOUSLY HORRIBLE INSTRUCTOR."
"YOU MUST'VE HAD"


exhale
inhale
inhale
exhale
inhale
exhale
but don't you dare insult "that person."
You can put me down all you want,
the one who engraved this dance into me...
I won't let you call


ever again!
"ridiculously horrible"
AH.
WHAT?
NOTHING MUCH.
Slide
.....
HER MOVE-MENTS...
HAVE CHANGED.

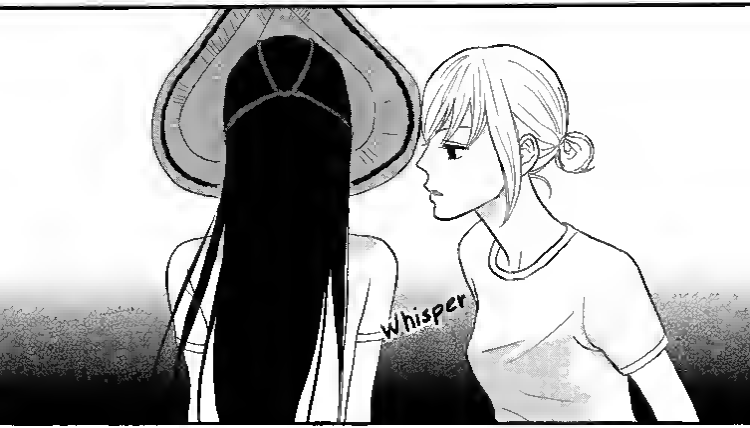
Ah!
STEP
Inhale
She's not as stiff anymore.
It's true.
She's moving more smoothly than before.
With each and every motion,

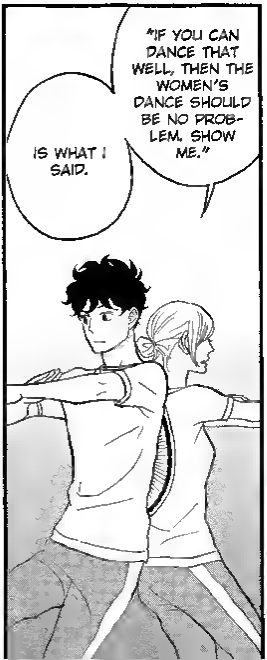
Ooh!
She's moving
like from that time.
STEP
Like she's fluttering in the wind.

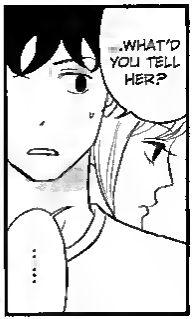
like she's swaying in the water.
That's how she's moving.

Bump!
!
OH/
MY
BA--
SAEKI.

EVEN AMONG THOSE RAISED IN YATSUO,
THERE'S NO ONE WHO CAN DANCE LIKE THAT.
WHO ON EARTH IS SHE?
OOH!
SO YOU THINK SO TOO, RIO!?
PISSES ME OFF.
HUH?
Step
step
ACK!
AND HERE I THOUGHT SHE'D LIGHTENED UP!
WHAT'RE YOU PLANNING NOW?


Whisper


"IF YOU CAN DANCE THAT WELL, THEN THE WOMEN'S DANCE SHOULD BE NO PROBLEM. SHOW ME."
IS WHAT I SAID.


...WHAT'D YOU TELL HER?
...

WHAT'RE YOU PILING ON THE PRESSURE FOR/?
SHE HAS STAGE FRIGHT/
IT'S NOT SOMETHING SHE CAN OVERCOME JUST LIKE THAT/
OH, COME ON...
UGH...
Raisc
THERE'S NO WAY. .
SHE CAN..
WHISPER
URGH...
WHAT AM I EVEN EXPECT-ING...?
...HEY.
LOOK AT THAT.

Inhale
Ooh!
It's the "Appeal"!
It's the first move of the women's dance!
Step

Aaah...
I really do like...
how she dances...

whenever I see her dance,
I feel like my heart is about to burst.
--but,

Why? What is this feeling?

...HEY...
.....
STAARE
SLIDE
YOU DID IT, HOTARUKO!
!!
HOTARUKO...
Fall
Slip

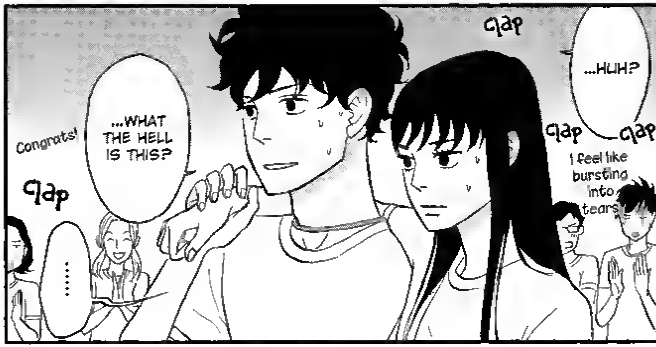
HAH--
...HAH--
ARE YOU OKAY!?
W-
WHAT'S WRONG?
Shiver
HAH!
Shiver
...HAH.
I DON'T HAVE ANY ENERGY LEFT...
...I CAN'T...
MY LEGS COMPLETELY FEEL LIKE JELLY.

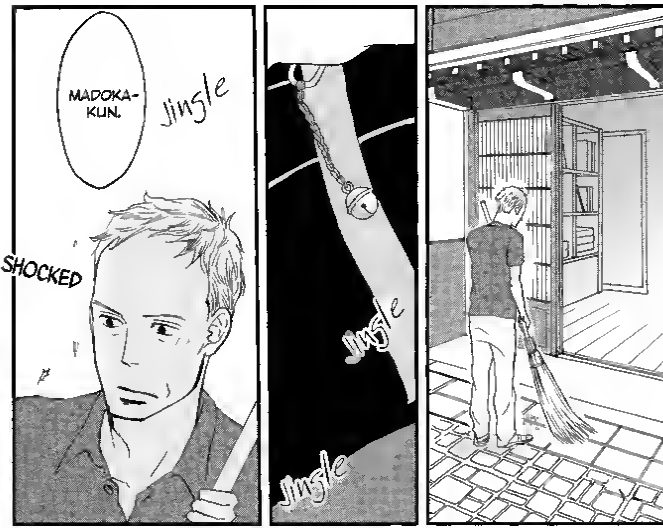
Thump
Huh?
What was that just now?
Oh, uh, ummm...
Can you stand up?
...Nope.
I just can't muster any strength...
Oh, yeah.
That was probably the first time
I'd seen her smile.
Hey, come on now!

WHAT'RE YOU DOING?
HURRY UP AND GIVE HER A HAND.
OH, YEAH, SURE.
Easy now. Easy.
WHY DON'T YOU
Spaced out
DO IT INSTEAD?
HUH?
LOOKS LIKE YOU'RE FINE.
I'LL LEAVE THE REST TO YOU, SAEKI.

RIO?
I DON'T PARTICULARLY CARE FOR BEING A THIRD WHEEL.
THE BELL'S ABOUT TO RING ANYWAY.
STAGGER
WOAH!
IF YOU STILL FEEL UNSTEADY, THEN GO TO THE CLINIC.

WHA--?
SINCE WHEN HAVE THE TWO OF YOU--!?
THEY'RE PRETTY MUCH AN OFFICIAL COUPLE ALREADY, RIGHT?
Eh?
YOU'RE TOO SLOW PICKING UP ON THIS STUFF, YOU'D SUCK AS A DETECTIVE.
THEY'RE BOTH GOOD AT DANCING, SO THEY REALLY SUIT EACH OTHER, NO?
SEE? THEY'RE NOT EVEN DENYING IT!
WHAT A WONDERFUL HAPPY ENDING!
clap
whistle
clap
whistle
clap
clap
whistle
clap
clap


Clap
...HUH?
Clap
Clap
I feel like bursting into tears
Congrats!
...WHAT THE HELL IS THIS?
Clap
.....

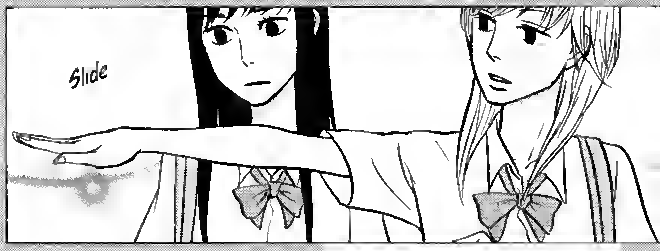

MADOKA-KUN.
Jingle
SHOCKED
Jingle
Jingle

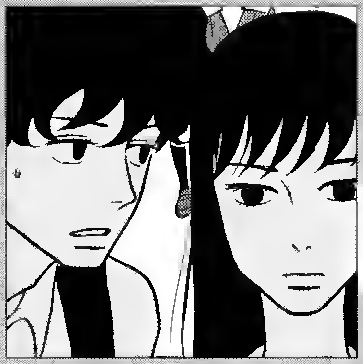
...I THOUGHT I TOLD YOU
TO STOP CALLING ME THAT, AT LEAST WHILE IN THIS TOWN.
IT'S FINE, ISN'T IT?
WHEN WE'RE ALONE AND NO ONE'S WATCHING, AT LEAST.
.....
NO CAN DO.

WHY NOT,
MADOKA-KUN?
If you...
I'd...
call out to me like that, with that voice...
"Madoka-kun, look!"
"It's really pretty!"
IF YOU'D EXCUSE ME.
Bow
WELL, THEN.
.....
Shaaa
Clatter
Clatter
Clatter

Jingle
Jingle
I...
When I hear the sound of that bell...
Jingle
<Tsukikage Baby> (1) *End*

The feelings started by just a little bit of interest are changing.

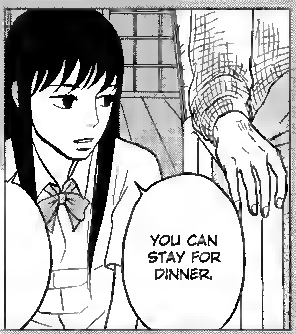




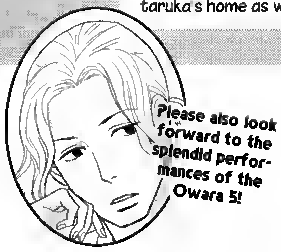
Despite being doubted at first, Hotaruko dances marvellously after donning a kasa. Her relationship with Rio is starting to change...!?

Hotaruko and Hikaru's "dating" relationship was only a cover to protect Madoka's name. At least, that was how it was supposed to be!?

From the "secret" comes out the "truth"---



What is there between him and Hotaruko? What is there in the past he does not know? Hikaru worries endlessly over Uncle Madoka's 'secret'. And it seems there are certain circumstances in Hotaruka's home as well...!?



"TSUKIKAGE BABY" VOLUME 2

OUT THIS WINTER!

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QUALITY CHECKER

VOLUME 1 CHAPTER 1

TSUKIKAGE BABY

BY KODAMA YUKI

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
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1

Tsukikage Baby

Kodama Yukimi

Tsukikage Baby

1

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Collected Book "Tsukikage Baby" ①

★ In a small provincial town filled with a spirit of preservation for a traditional performance art called "Owara" arrives Hotaruko, a transfer student from Tokyo When a local boy named Hikaru catches her in an awkward stance in - what was supposed to be - an empty classroom they form a strange bond What's more their bond makes way for an unexpected development ?!

●Yuki Kodama's Works

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Hikari no Umi
● Yuki Kodama's Short Stories
① Mango no Namida
② Beautiful Sunset
★ Flower Comics Special
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★ Shogakukan Bunko
Hagoromo Mishin
Hikari no Umi

http://www.shogakukan.co.jp/

Fαモバイル

Cover design／名久井直子

Yuki Kodama's Profile

Born on 9/26, Blood Type A. A native of Nagasaki Prefecture. Debuted in the year 2000 with the short story "Pomegranate" in "Cutie Comic (Takarajima Company)." Starting from 2005, after submitting numerous other works to "Monthly Flowers", she made her comic debut in 2007 with "Hikari no Umi." In 2012, "Sakamichi no Apollon" won the 57th Shogakukan Manga Award for general manga.

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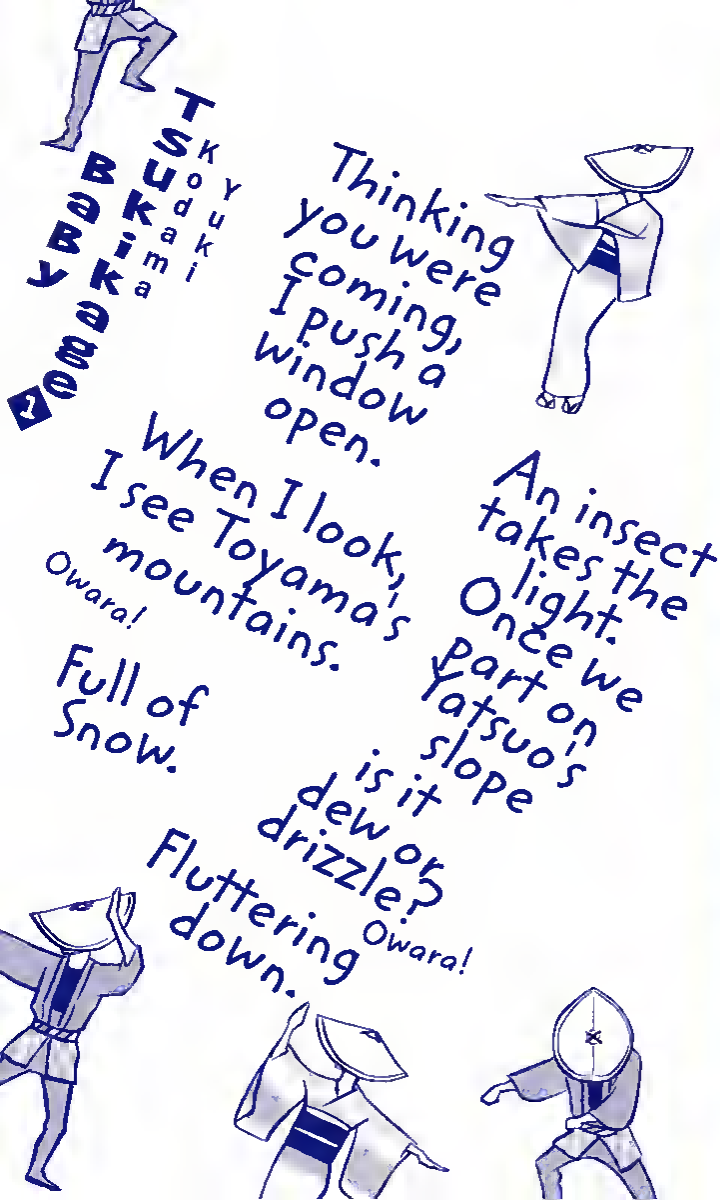
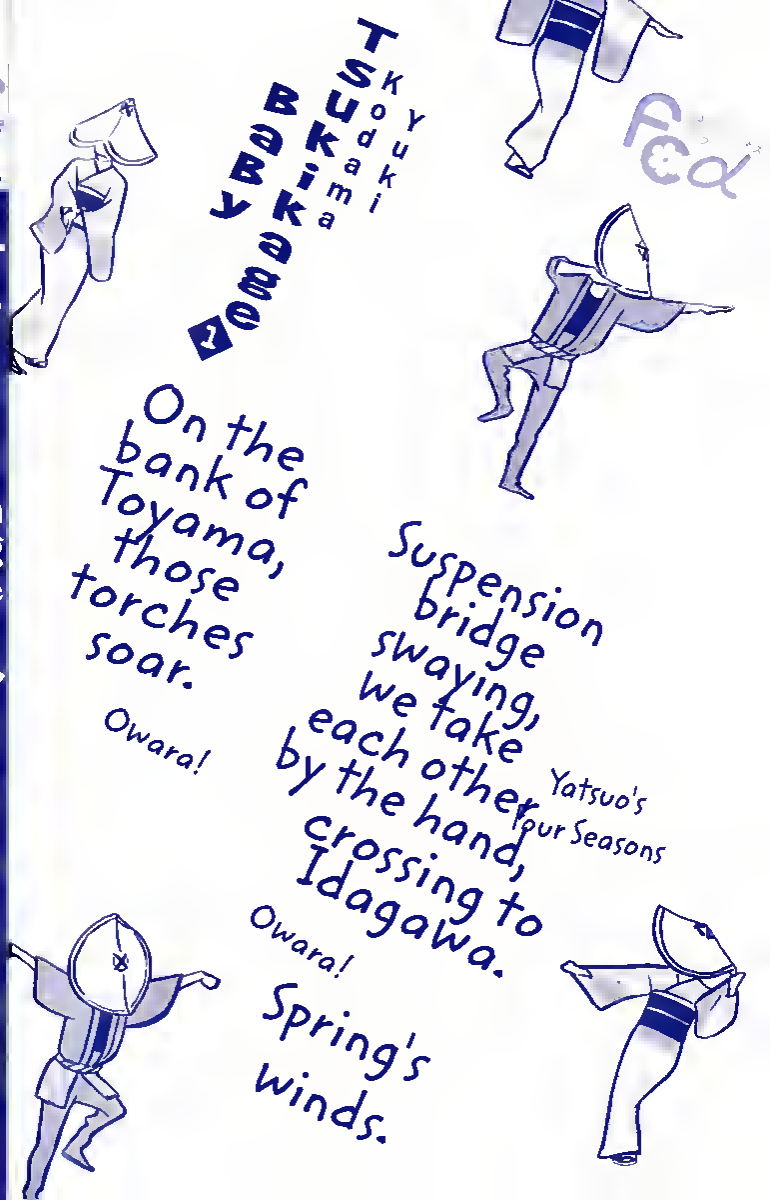

Thinking you were coming, I push a window open.
An insect takes the light. Once we part on Yatsuo's slope is it dew or drizzle?
When I look, I see Toyama's mountains. Full of Snow.
Owara!
Owara!
Fluttering down.

FLOWER COMICS α flowers

Tsukikage Baby 1

Kodama Yukimi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Owara!
Suspension bridge swaying, we take each other by the hand, crossing to Idagawa.
Yatsuo's four Seasons
Owara!
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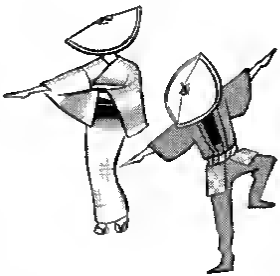
Tsukikage BaBy ◆1

KoDama YuKi



＊flowers フラワーコミックスα＊

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＊flowers フラワーコミックスα＊

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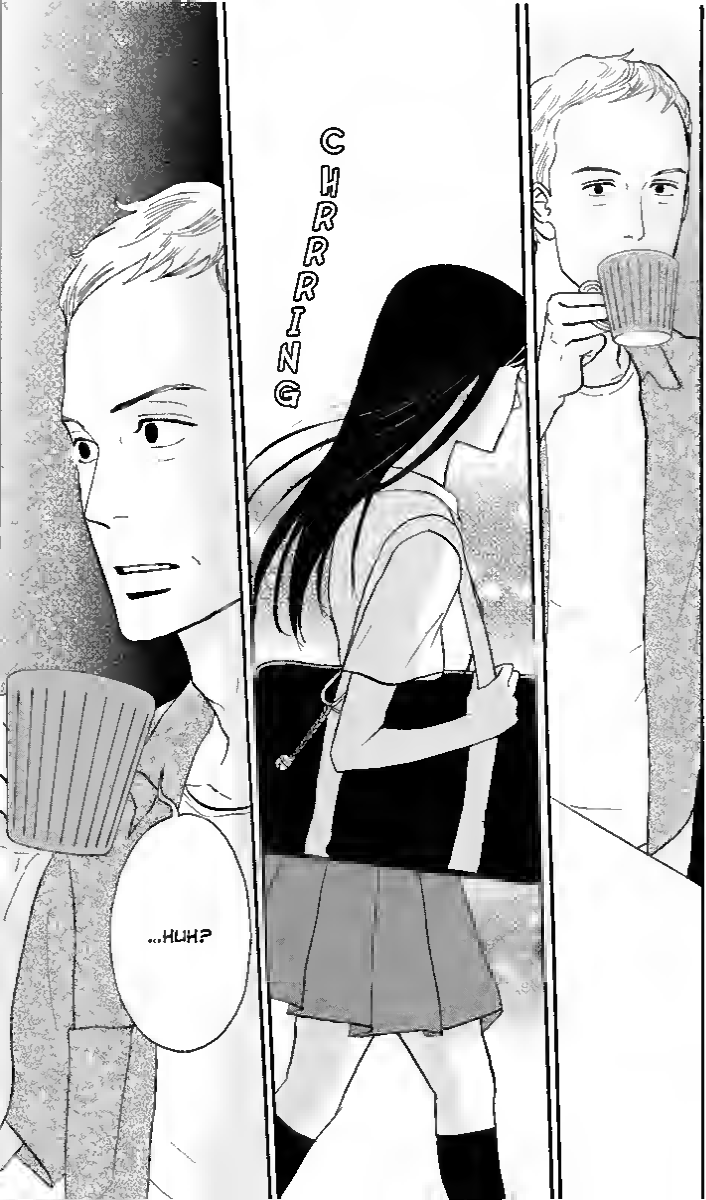
DID YOU BURN THAT CD I ASKED FOR THE OTHER DAY?
YEAH.
I LEFT IT NEXT TO THE REGISTER, SO GO AND GET IT.
THANKS!
OH, YEAH YOU MISSED SCHOOL FOR A FEW DAYS BECAUSE YOU WERE DOWN WITH A COLD?
ALL BETTER NOW.

I'M AS GOOD AS NEW.
DON'T PUSH YOURSELF.
OK, OK.
I'M GOING!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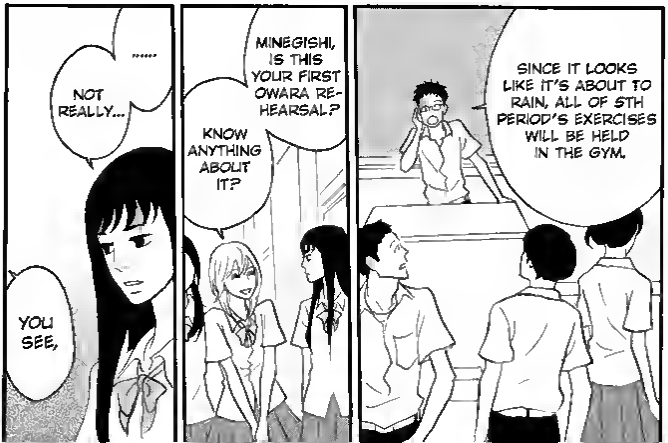
...HUH?

HOT!
...
SL
OSH
A hallucination?
What was that?
Or could it be...

OH, YEAH. YOU WERE OUT SICK, SO YOU DIDN'T KNOW.
ARE YOU MAKING EYES AT THE NEW GIRL?
SAEKI
I WAS JUST WONDERING WHAT'S A STRANGER DOING IN OUR CLASS-ROOM.
HUH? NO.
BUT EVEN WHEN WE TRY TALKING TO HER, HER EXPRESSION NEVER CHANGES.
MAKES IT HARD TO APPROACH HER.
SOME GIRLS CALL HER A NOH MASK.
THEY SAID SHE CAME FROM TOKYO,
I THINK HER NAME'S MINEGISHI.

NOH MASK, HUH?
Girls are scary
But I get where they're coming from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YOU SEE,

EVERY YEAR, IN THIS TOWN OF YATSUO-MACHI, WE HAVE A FESTIVAL IN SEPTEMBER CALLED THE "KAZE NO BON".
HAVEN'T YOU SEEN IT ON THE NEWS?
MEN AND WOMEN WEAR STRAW HATS, AND DANCE IN THE STREETS TO THE TUNE OF A PERSON SINGING AND THE STRUMMING OF THE SHAMISEN.
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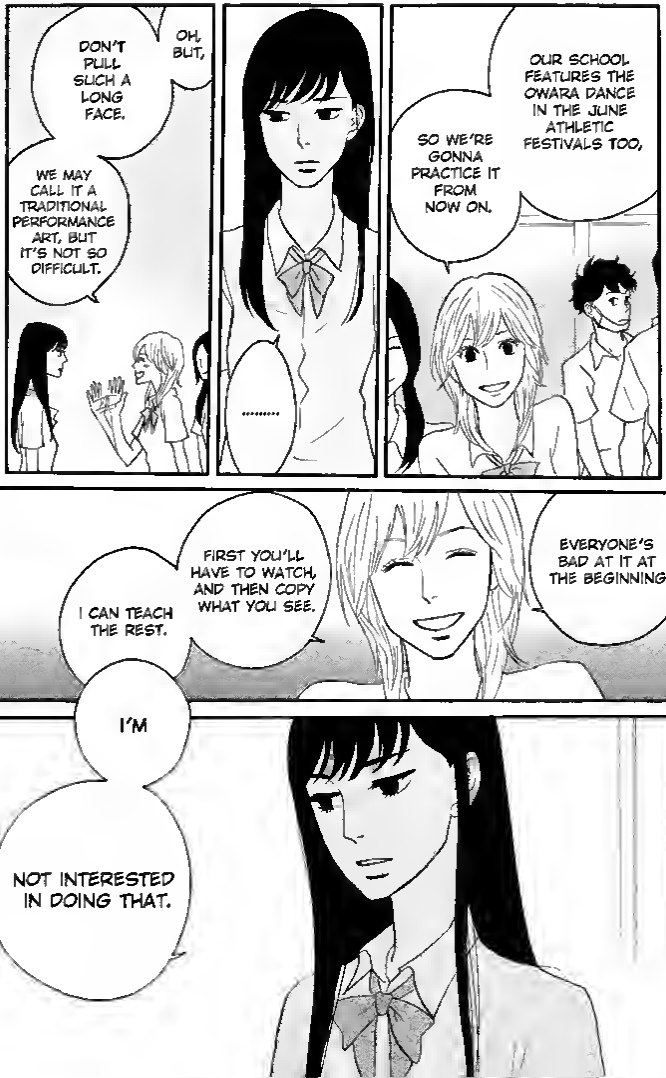
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I CAN TEACH THE REST.
I'M
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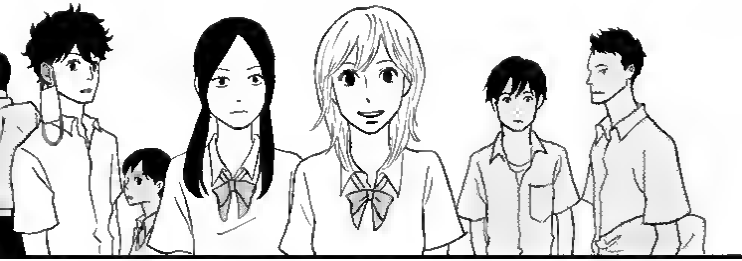

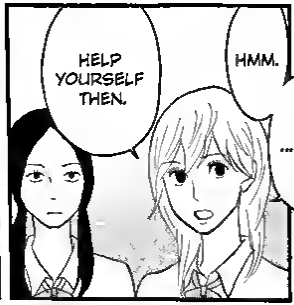
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HMM.
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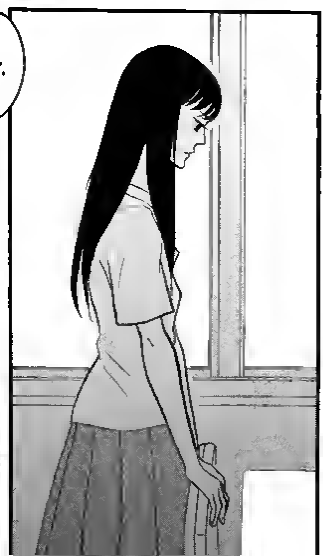
LET'S GO, SAEKI.
HEY.



I shall accompany you!
Come and sinning!

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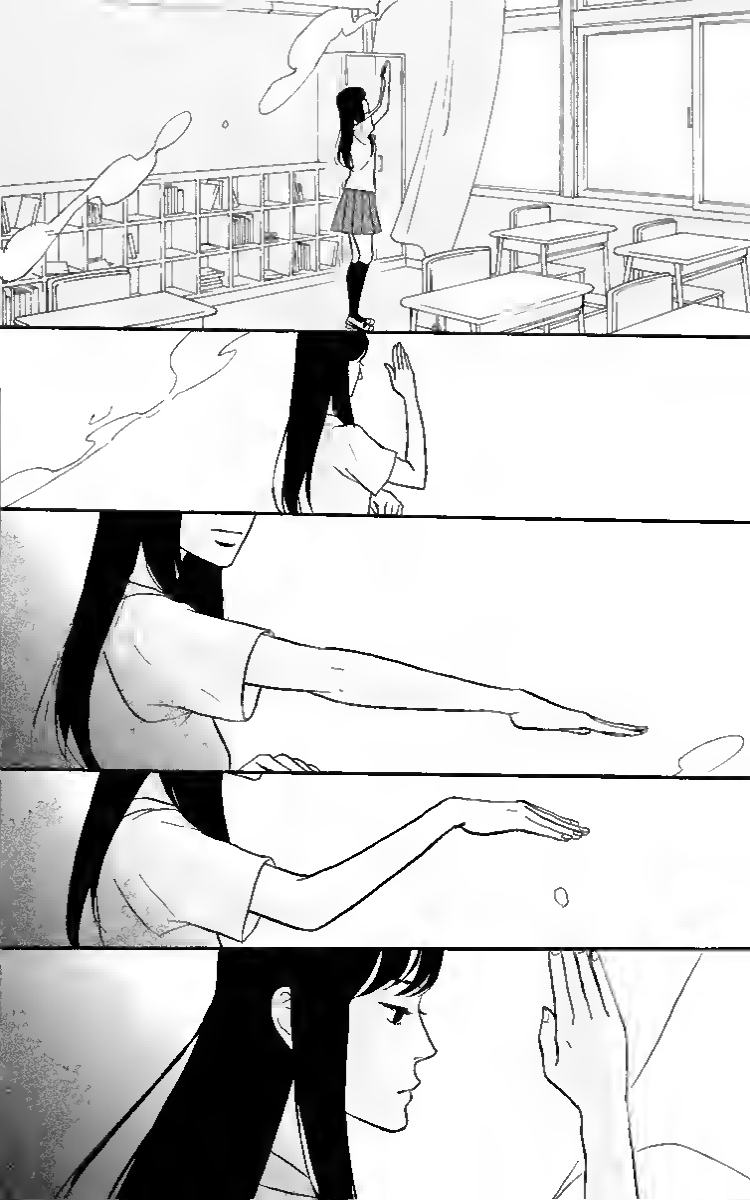
EARLIER IN THE CLASSROOM, DIDN'T SHE SAY SHE WASN'T INTERESTED IN OWARA?
UGH! SO THAT'S WHAT SHE'S DOING?
MINEGISHI-SAN WALKED OUT WITHOUT DANCING AT ALL.
MAYBE SHE'S FEELING SICK.
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
YOU, THERE. STOP TALKING!
ARE ALL THE CLASS REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT?

OK, SO FOR THIS YEAR'S ATHLETIC FESTIVAL, WE TALKED ABOUT TEAMING UP WITH A DIFFERENT OWARA MASTER TO DANCE.
HAVE WE FOUND A SOUND SOURCE?
I'VE BORROWED ONE!
I HAVE GRANDPA HII'S CASSETTE.
AH!
I FORGOT MY CD!!
I'LL GO GET IT!
(Don't tell me) it's at home?
Class room, class room
CLANG KSSHHH KSSHHH
THUMP KSSHHH
THE MUSIC ECHOES PRETTY LOUD.
I'VE BEEN HEARING IT A LOT DURING CLASS LATELY
AND CAN'T CONCENTRATE...



GRIP

FREEZE

BLUUUUSH
HEY! WAI-...
DASH
WAIT A SEC!
SWOOOSH
WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?!
HEY, WAIT...
...AH-
ACHOOO
ACHOOOO
ACHOOOO
SNIFF

That surprised me.

I SEE.
DURING THE OWARA DRILL, HER STOMACH STARTED HURTING.
SHE WENT TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE.
WHAT HAPPENED TO MINEGISHI?

CLANG
UNSURE
UNSURE

ABOUT WHAT YOU SAW EARLIER,
DON'T TELL ANYONE
CHIRPING

HEY!
FREEZE~ooo
QUIT FOLLOWING ME.
WHAT'S WITH YOU?
MY HOUSE IS THIS WAY!
I'M NOT FOLLOWING YOU BECAUSE I WANT TO.
SO DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA.
OK?!
.....
LOOK.

THAT'S A FALSE ACCUSATION!
THAT'S PRETTY RUDE.
YOU'RE NOT GONNA APOLOGIZE FOR TREATING ME LIKE A STALKER?
HEY!
TURN
.....
TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP
HEEEEY!
HEEEY! TELL ME!
WHY WERE YOU DANCING BY YOURSELF IN THE CLASSROOM EARLIER?!
HFF ooo

OH, MY GOD ...!!
Man, she runs fast!
WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF PEOPLE HEAR YOU?
DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO TELL ANYONE?
WHY ARE YOU HIDING IT?
YOU WERE DANCING SO WELL, IT'D BE A WASTE.
THE OLD DANCES ARE SIMPLE, SO I GET HOW THE TOURISTS CAN JUST COPY THE MOVES JUST BY WATCHING,
BUT YOU WERE DOING THE WOMEN'S DANCE.
EVEN THOSE WHO GREW UP IN THIS TOWN AND HAVE SEEN IT SINCE
HAVE A HARD TIME MEMORIZING THE DANCE WITHOUT CONSTANT PRACTICE.

THE WOMEN'S DANCE THAT YOU DID,
MADE EVEN A BORN AND RAISED NATIVE LIKE ME, SURPRISED TO SEE IT.
IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL DANCE.
HUH?
WELL,
IT LOOKED OK?
YEAH.
WAS I DANCING?
I PROBABLY SOUND CONCEITED
...JUST KIDDING.
THAT'S NOT THE POINT...
PROPERLY?
I-
ANYWAY, WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS...

I'M GLAD...
...I WAS ABLE TO
DANCE PROPERLY...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

PLOP
CRAP.
PLOP
IT'S RAIN-ING.
PLOP
AH.
PLOP
IT'S STARTING TO POUR DOWN.
UM.
LET'S GO THERE.
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
GET OUR-SELVES OUT OF THE RAIN.
CHRRING

ZWSSHHH
SORRY ...
FOR SHOUTING BACK THERE.
I'M NOT PLANNING TO TELL ANYONE THAT I SAW YOU DANCING.
DON'T WORRY.

THANKS ...
.....
HEY.
CAN I ASK YOU SOME-THING?...
PI RO RO RO
OH, A PHONE CALL.
.....
HELLO?
GRAND-MA?
OH, UH-HUH.
I WANTED TO ASK HER,
"WHO TAUGHT YOU TO DO THE 'OWARA'?"
YEAH, I'M OK.
I'M TAKING SHELTER FROM THE RAIN RIGHT NOW.

.....
.....
I PUT IT IN THIS MORNING TOO!
OH MY GOD...
PUSH PUSH
UP
IT CAN WAIT
OH, WELL.
...EH?!
REALLY? ..OH!
AP
SW
BESIDES, YOU WERE WEARING A MASK UNTIL NOW...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? AREN'T YOU CATCHING A COLD?
I'LL RUN BACK HOME.
HUH?
PLUS IT'S GETTING LIGHTER.
GOOD THING YOU FOUND YOUR UMBRELLA.

.....
SNIFF
OK...
MY UMBREL-LA...?
WH-
.....
WHY DON'T YOU COME UNDER
HUH?
CHIRRING
CHIRRING

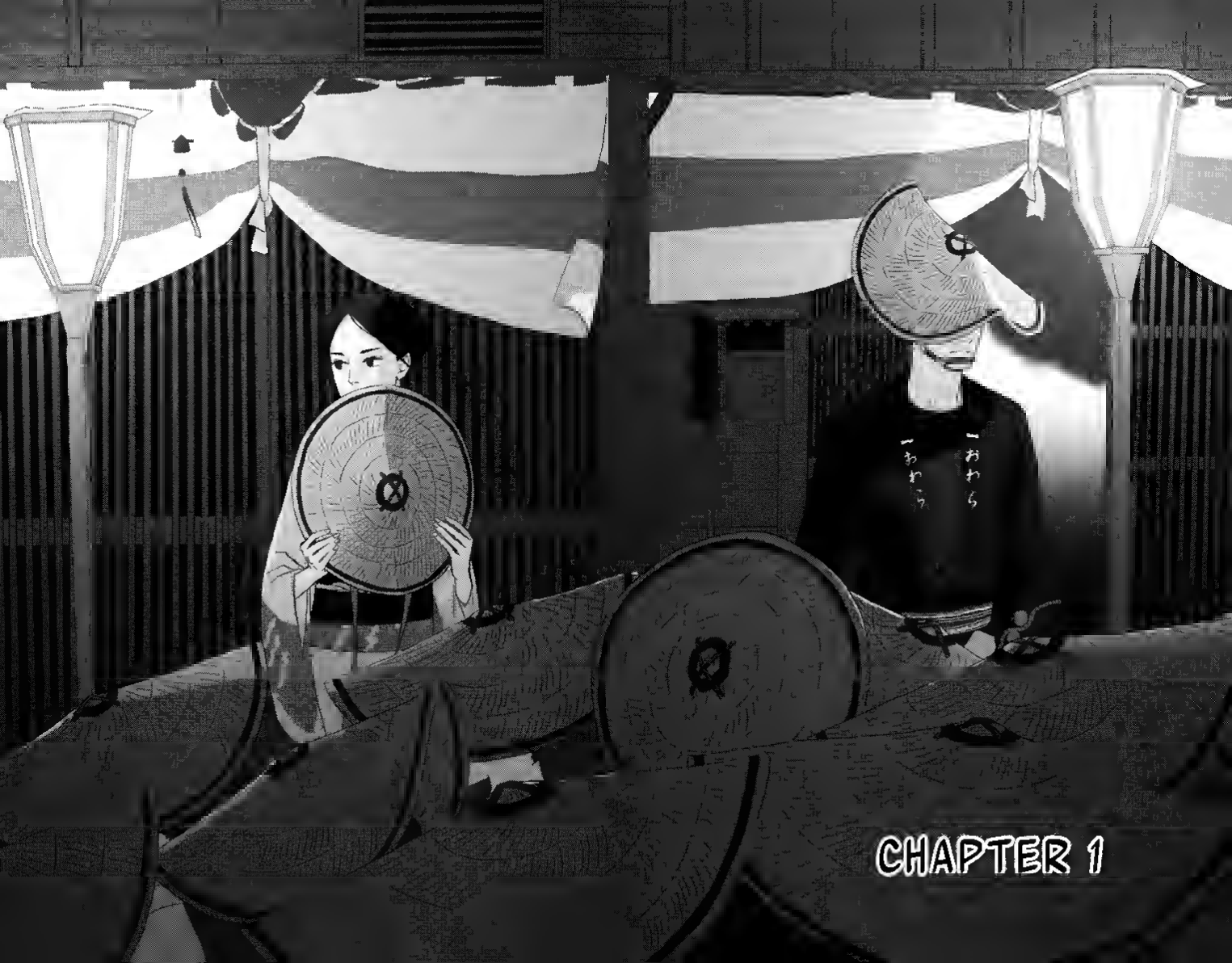
Strange.
What is this?
What I'm feeling
seems like déjà vu.
Over here
Where's your house?
This way?
Not there
UH...
DON'T TELL ME,
Here? Really?
Yes.
WE'RE NEIGHBORS...?
HOLD ON A SEC.
...OH, YEAH!
SLOWLY
CHIRIN
CHIRIN

HUH?
WHAT?
I WANNA STOP BY THAT SHOP OVER THERE.
IT'S MY UNCLE'S OLD SOUVENIR SHOP.
UNCLE?
OH.
WELCOME HOME, HIKARU.
I WONDER WHY?
LEMME BORROW YOUR COM-PUTER
UNCLE, THE CD YOU GAVE ME THIS MORNING
WOULDN'T PLAY AT SCHOOL.
UH-OH.

MA... DOKA-KUN?
MINE-GISHI-SAN, FEEL FREE TO BROWSE AROUND.
OH.

HUH?

..What?
What's this?
What the heck is going on?
SPLASH!


CHAPTER 1

Hatsumimi
TRANSLATOR

EDITOR(S)
yuuka & Bruno

cheesecrayons
PROOF READER

Minelauva
QUALITY CHECKER

VOLUME 1 CHAPTER 1

TSUKIKAGE BABY

BY KODAMA YUKI

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FLOWER COMICS α

1

Tsukikage Baby

Kodama Yukimi

Tsukikage Baby

1

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Collected Book "Tsukikage Baby" ①

★ In a small provincial town filled with a spirit of preservation for a traditional performance art called "Owara" arrives Hotaruko, a transfer student from Tokyo When a local boy named Hikaru catches her in an awkward stance in - what was supposed to be - an empty classroom they form a strange bond What's more their bond makes way for an unexpected development ?!

●Yuki Kodama's Works

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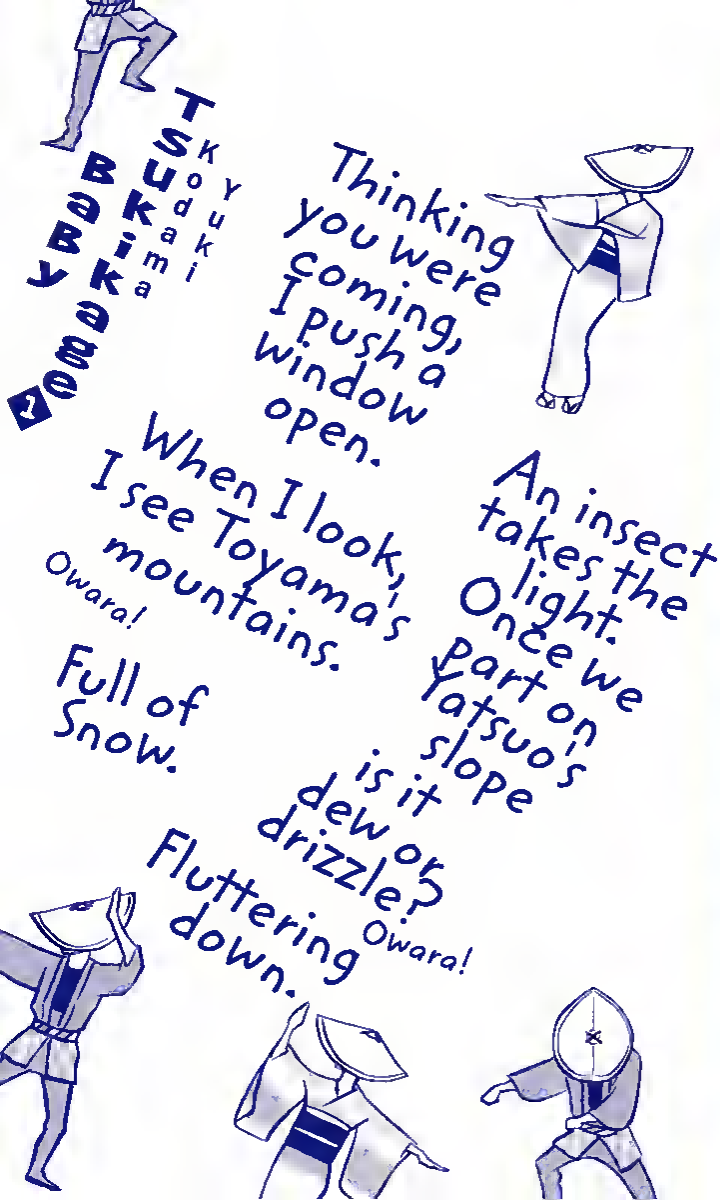
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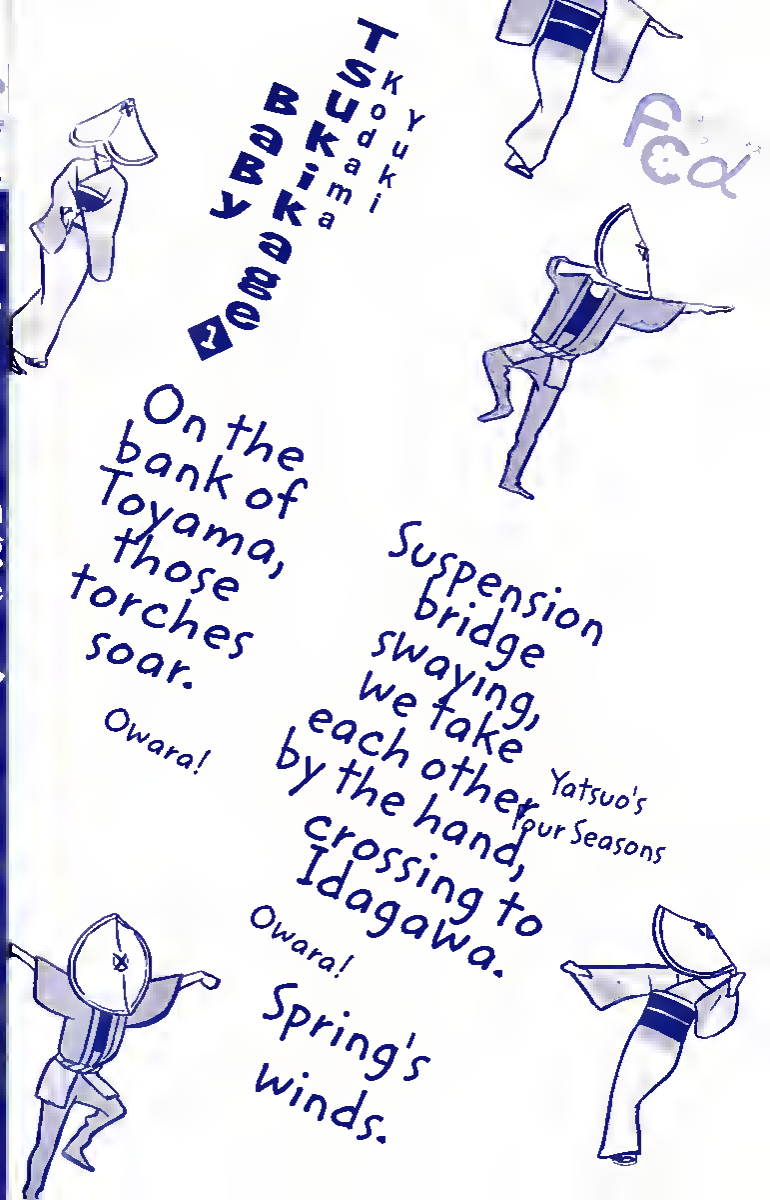
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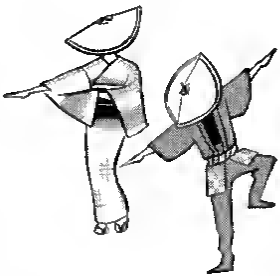

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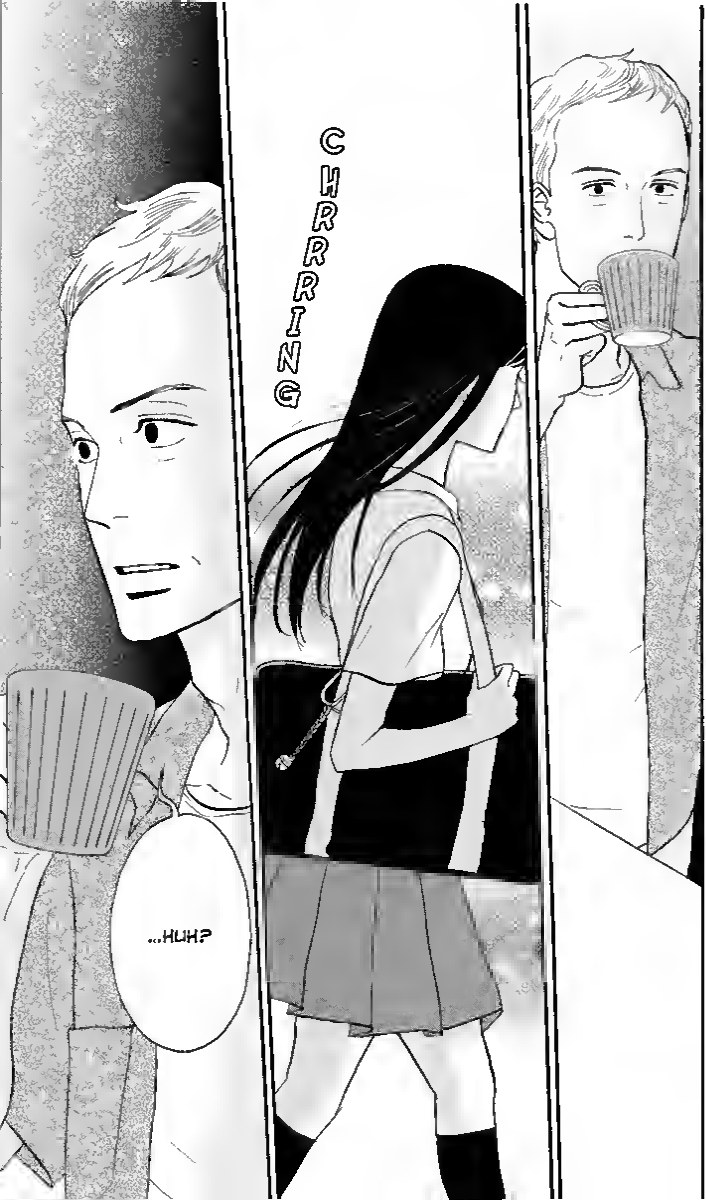
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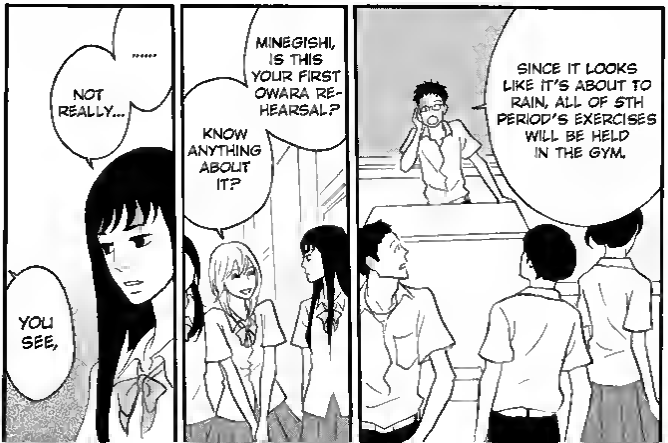
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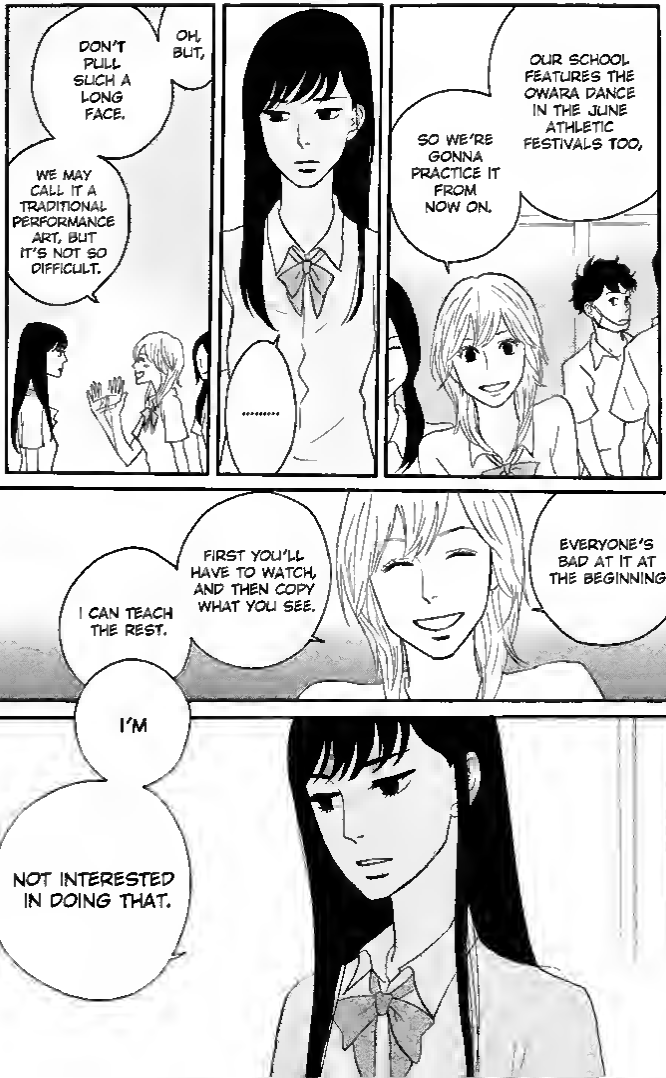
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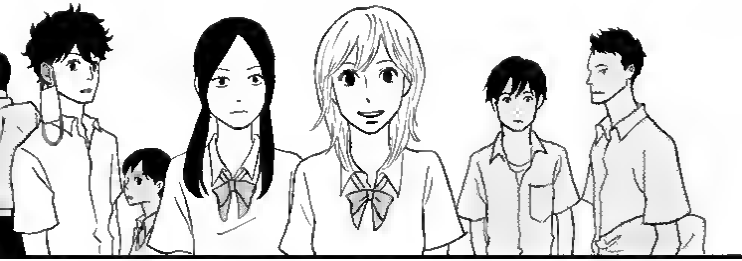

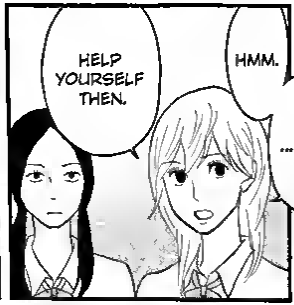
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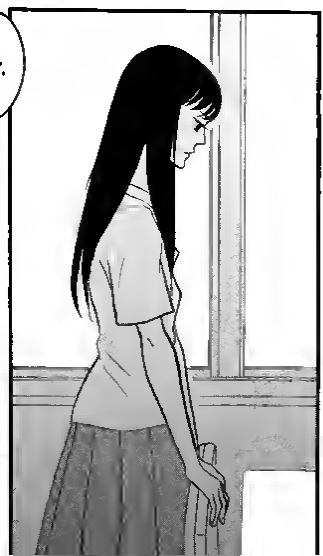

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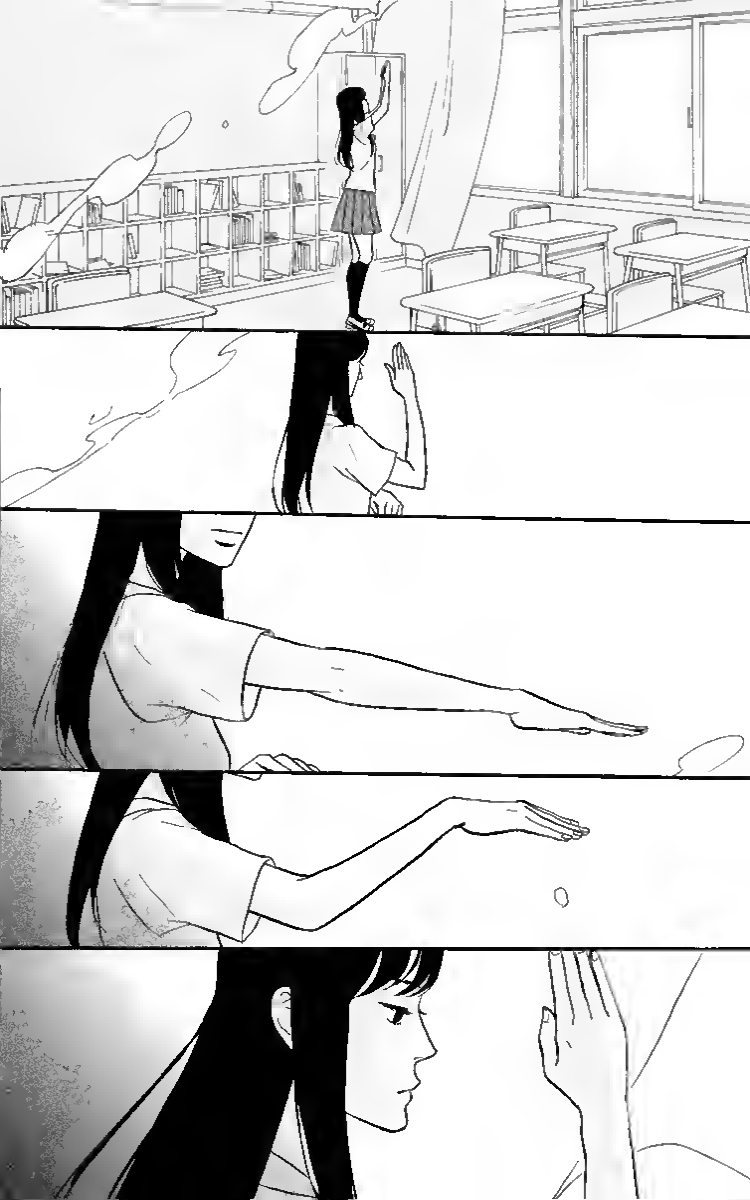
I'VE BEEN HEARING IT A LOT DURING CLASS LATELY
AND CAN'T CONCENTRATE...



GRIP

FREEZE

BLUUUUSH
HEY! WAI-...
DASH
WAIT A SEC!
SWOOOSH
WHY ARE YOU RUNNING AWAY?!
HEY, WAIT...
...AH-
ACHOOO
ACHOOOO
ACHOOOO
SNIFF

That surprised me.

I SEE.
DURING THE OWARA DRILL, HER STOMACH STARTED HURTING.
SHE WENT TO THE NURSE'S OFFICE.
WHAT HAPPENED TO MINEGISHI?

CLANG
UNSURE
UNSURE

ABOUT WHAT YOU SAW EARLIER,
DON'T TELL ANYONE
CHIRPING

HEY!
FREEZE~ooo
QUIT FOLLOWING ME.
WHAT'S WITH YOU?
MY HOUSE IS THIS WAY!
I'M NOT FOLLOWING YOU BECAUSE I WANT TO.
SO DON'T GET THE WRONG IDEA.
OK?!
.....
LOOK.

THAT'S A FALSE ACCUSATION!
THAT'S PRETTY RUDE.
YOU'RE NOT GONNA APOLOGIZE FOR TREATING ME LIKE A STALKER?
HEY!
TURN
.....
TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP TAP
HEEEEY!
HEEEY! TELL ME!
WHY WERE YOU DANCING BY YOURSELF IN THE CLASSROOM EARLIER?!
HFF ooo

OH, MY GOD ...!!
Man, she runs fast!
WHAT'LL HAPPEN IF PEOPLE HEAR YOU?
DIDN'T I TELL YOU NOT TO TELL ANYONE?
WHY ARE YOU HIDING IT?
YOU WERE DANCING SO WELL, IT'D BE A WASTE.
THE OLD DANCES ARE SIMPLE, SO I GET HOW THE TOURISTS CAN JUST COPY THE MOVES JUST BY WATCHING,
BUT YOU WERE DOING THE WOMEN'S DANCE.
EVEN THOSE WHO GREW UP IN THIS TOWN AND HAVE SEEN IT SINCE
HAVE A HARD TIME MEMORIZING THE DANCE WITHOUT CONSTANT PRACTICE.

THE WOMEN'S DANCE THAT YOU DID,
MADE EVEN A BORN AND RAISED NATIVE LIKE ME, SURPRISED TO SEE IT.
IT WAS A BEAUTIFUL DANCE.
HUH?
WELL,
IT LOOKED OK?
YEAH.
WAS I DANCING?
I PROBABLY SOUND CONCEITED
...JUST KIDDING.
THAT'S NOT THE POINT...
PROPERLY?
I-
ANYWAY, WHAT I WANT TO KNOW IS...

I'M GLAD...
...I WAS ABLE TO
DANCE PROPERLY...
RUSTLE
RUSTLE
RUSTLE

PLOP
CRAP.
PLOP
IT'S RAIN-ING.
PLOP
AH.
PLOP
IT'S STARTING TO POUR DOWN.
UM.
LET'S GO THERE.
PLOP
PLOP
PLOP
GET OUR-SELVES OUT OF THE RAIN.
CHRRING

ZWSSHHH
SORRY ...
FOR SHOUTING BACK THERE.
I'M NOT PLANNING TO TELL ANYONE THAT I SAW YOU DANCING.
DON'T WORRY.

THANKS ...
.....
HEY.
CAN I ASK YOU SOME-THING?...
PI RO RO RO
OH, A PHONE CALL.
.....
HELLO?
GRAND-MA?
OH, UH-HUH.
I WANTED TO ASK HER,
"WHO TAUGHT YOU TO DO THE 'OWARA'?"
YEAH, I'M OK.
I'M TAKING SHELTER FROM THE RAIN RIGHT NOW.

.....
.....
I PUT IT IN THIS MORNING TOO!
OH MY GOD...
PUSH PUSH
UP
IT CAN WAIT
OH, WELL.
...EH?!
REALLY? ..OH!
AP
SW
BESIDES, YOU WERE WEARING A MASK UNTIL NOW...
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? AREN'T YOU CATCHING A COLD?
I'LL RUN BACK HOME.
HUH?
PLUS IT'S GETTING LIGHTER.
GOOD THING YOU FOUND YOUR UMBRELLA.

.....
SNIFF
OK...
MY UMBREL-LA...?
WH-
.....
WHY DON'T YOU COME UNDER
HUH?
CHIRRING
CHIRRING

Strange.
What is this?
What I'm feeling
seems like déjà vu.
Over here
Where's your house?
This way?
Not there
UH...
DON'T TELL ME,
Here? Really?
Yes.
WE'RE NEIGHBORS...?
HOLD ON A SEC.
...OH, YEAH!
SLOWLY
CHIRIN
CHIRIN

HUH?
WHAT?
I WANNA STOP BY THAT SHOP OVER THERE.
IT'S MY UNCLE'S OLD SOUVENIR SHOP.
UNCLE?
OH.
WELCOME HOME, HIKARU.
I WONDER WHY?
LEMME BORROW YOUR COM-PUTER
UNCLE, THE CD YOU GAVE ME THIS MORNING
WOULDN'T PLAY AT SCHOOL.
UH-OH.

MA... DOKA-KUN?
MINE-GISHI-SAN, FEEL FREE TO BROWSE AROUND.
OH.

HUH?

..What?
What's this?
What the heck is going on?
SPLASH!

Hatsumimi
TRANSLATOR

EDITOR(S)
Bruno

octopus
PROOF READER

Stiletto
QUALITY CHECKER

VOLUME 1 CHAPTER 2

TSUKIKAGE BABY

BY KODAMA YUKI

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
stiletto heels
HTTP://WWW.STILETTOHEELSTEAM.COM

CHAPTER 2

WIDE
WH-
WHAT ...?
YOU TWO KNOW EACH OTHER?
.....
YEAH.
I HAVE A FRIEND WHO'S AN ARCHITECT IN TOKYO... SHE'S THE DAUGHTER.
WHILE I STAYED THERE, WE OFTEN...
I...

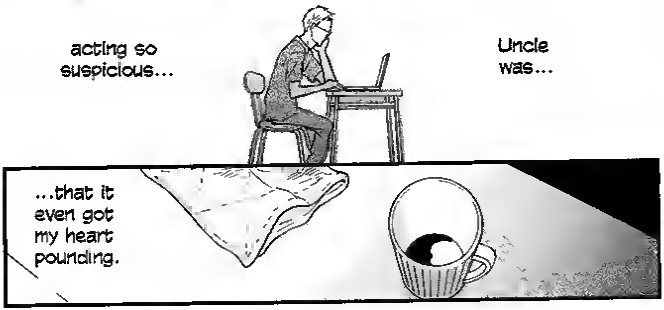
I CAME TO THIS TOWN BECAUSE I WANTED TO SEE YOU, MADOKA-KUN.
COME HERE.

HOLD ON. I'LL BURN YOU ANOTHER COPY.
OH! THE CD.
WHAT WAS IT YOU CAME FOR?
LET'S SEE...

I'M..
GOING HOME.
MY GRANDMOTHER'S PROBABLY WORRIED.
SCRAPE
CLICK
CHRRING
SURE.
CAN I COME AGAIN.
"UNCLE" MADOKA?

NUH?
WAI-
UM-BREL-LA.
GRAB
THANKS.

CLICK
CLICK


acting so suspicious...
Uncle was...
...that it even got my heart pounding.

I couldn't ask what I wanted to ask him.
MORNING, HIKARU!
YOU'RE EARLY TODAY!

EYEWITNESS REPORT ..?
SHE WAS SURE SHE SAW YOU.
WAS MY MOM LYING ON HER EYEWITNESS REPORT?
FUNNY, YOUR EYES LOOK DEAD.
OH?
SHE SAID YOU AND THE TRANSFER STUDENT
WERE WALKING HOME ALL FRIENDLY, SHARING AN UMBRELLA.
WE WERE ALL SAYING HOW YOU WERE FINALLY STRUCK BY CUPID'S ARROW,
AND IT CREATED A BUZZ AMONG OUR GROUP.
-TAKE ...?
WELL, BY THE WAY YOU'RE ACTING, IT MUST'VE BEEN A MIS-
OF ALL PEOPLE, YOUR MOM HAD TO BE THE ONE TO SEE US
IT'S GONNA SPREAD ALL OVER TOWN IN HALF A DAY!
WHAT ?!

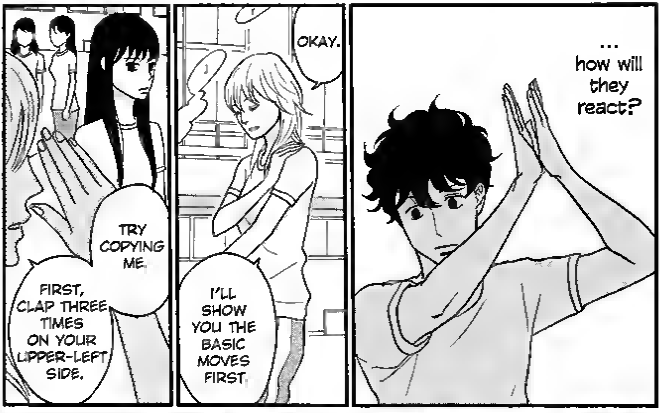
SO YOU'VE BEEN BITTEN BY THE LOVE BUG AFTER SHARING AN UMBRELLA WITH THE TRANSFER STUDENT?!
YOU ...
REALLY ?!
WHOA!
WAY TO GO!
.....
LOWER YOUR VOICE
THAT'S ONLY THE FIRST PART OF THE STORY.
WHAT'RE YOU SAYING ...?
ISN'T IT LOVE WHEN YOU GET TO SHARE AN UMBRELLA WITH A GIRL?
DUNNO
HUH?
YEAH, WE DID SHARE AN UMBRELLA
BUT YOU CAN FORGET ABOUT LOVE.
OH! I GET IT!
THE REASON YOU'RE DOWN TODAY IS BECAUSE YOU'RE FEELING THE PAIN OF LOVE.
AM I RIGHT?
SIGH ...

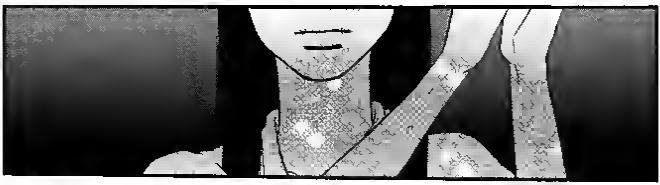
AHH!
I DON'T CARE ANYMORE!
IT'S NOT MY BUSINESS!
STOMP STOMP STOMP
Not his business?
Why should I have to feel so confused?
Uncle Madoka is single with no children.
I was just a kid in the neighborhood,
but he treated me like I was his own son.
To think that a man who was like another father to me...

at the sight of a high school girl.
... would turn so red ...
Oh! I caught it to him
I object!
NO
I don't want to think about it anymore.

I'm going to avoid looking in her direction.
Today,
IF SHE PARTICIPATES IN THE OWARA REHEARSAL ..
BUT...
...then I can't help being curious.

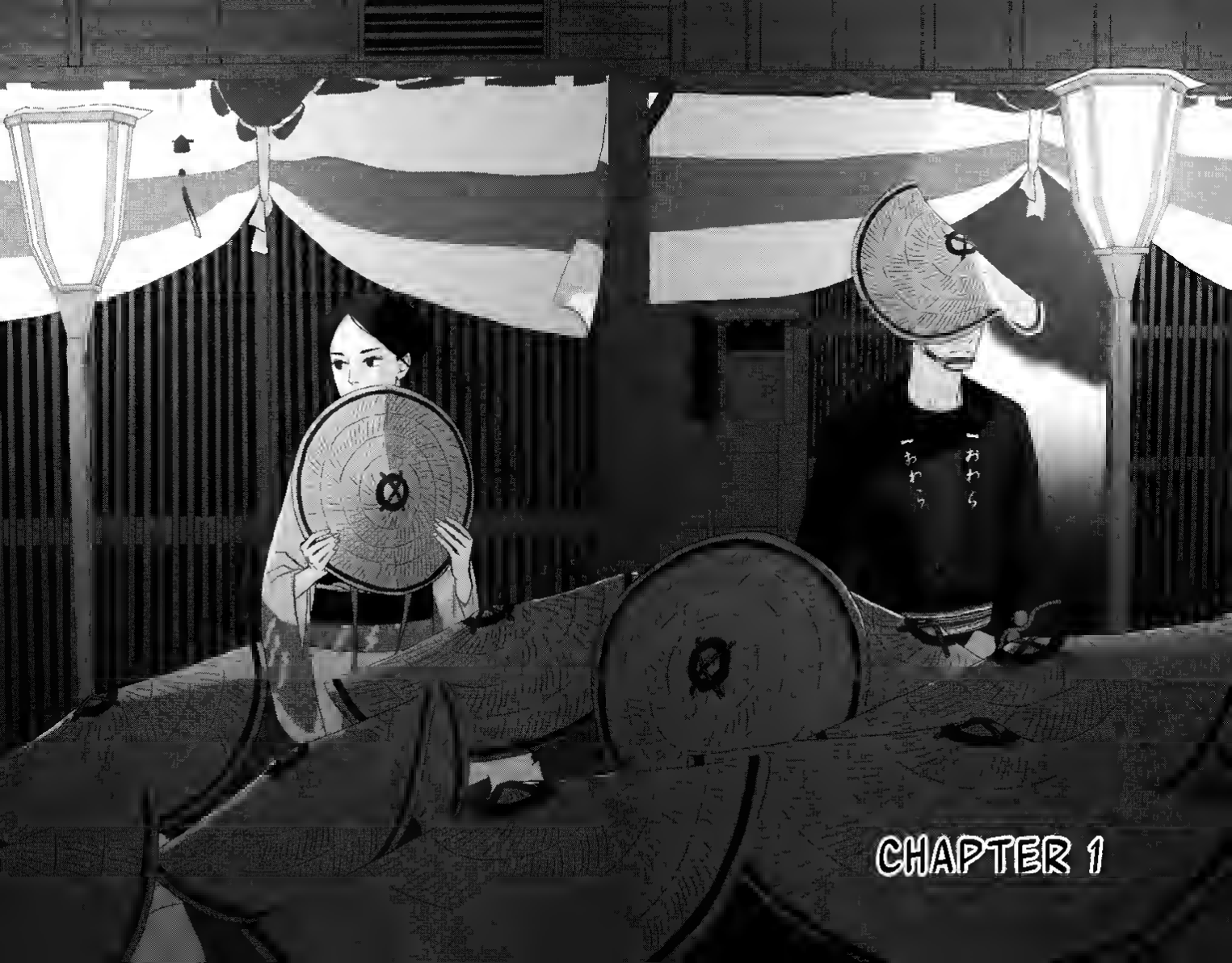
RIO-CHAN,
CAN YOU SHOW MINEGISHI A SAMPLE OF OUR DANCE?
.....
BUT SHE SAID SHE WASN'T INTERESTED YESTERDAY.
WOULDN'T IT BE A WASTE OF TIME THEN?
NOW, NOW DON'T SAY THAT.
WHEN SHE SEES HOW BEAUTIFULLY YOU DANCE, SHE'LL WANT TO GIVE IT A TRY TOO.
GUESS I CAN GIVE IT A GO.
BUT IF SHE LOOKS BORED, I'M GONNA STOP.
...
When everyone sees her doing that dance...
...she dances, what will it look like?
When...
WHY DO BOYS AND GIRLS HAVE TO DANCE SEPARATELY TODAY OF ALL DAYS?
I wanna see.
SAEKI!
DON'T LOOK AWAY!

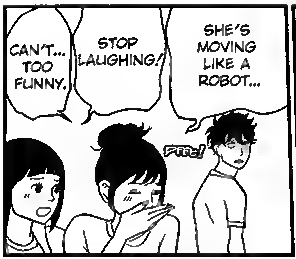

FIRST, CLAP THREE TIMES ON YOUR UPPER-LEFT SIDE.
TRY COPYING ME.
I'LL SHOW YOU THE BASIC MOVES FIRST.
OKAY.
... how will they react?

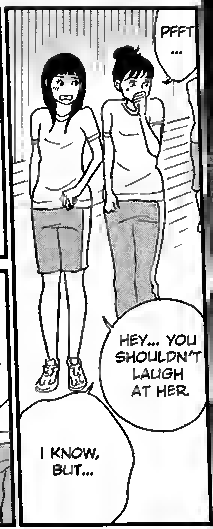


LOOK ...
HEY.
HUSH
NOT AGAIN.
Hazou...

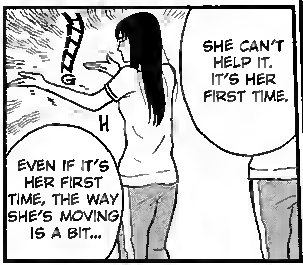
STRAIN
STRAIN
STRAIN
HUH?!
...?!
Whaaat?
KYAAAAA-N


CHAPTER 1

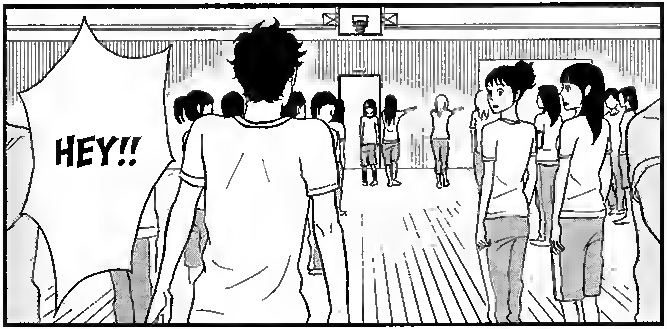

CAN'T... TOO FUNNY.
STOP LAUGHING!
SHE'S MOVING LIKE A ROBOT...
PFFT!

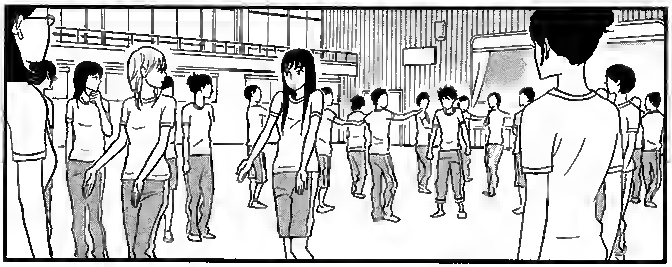

PFFT ...
HEY... YOU SHOULDN'T LAUGH AT HER.
I KNOW, BUT...

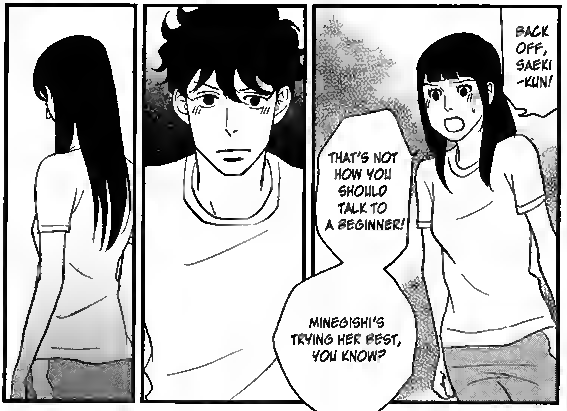
What's she doing?


SHE CAN'T HELP IT. IT'S HER FIRST TIME.
EVEN IF IT'S HER FIRST TIME, THE WAY SHE'S MOVING IS A BIT...

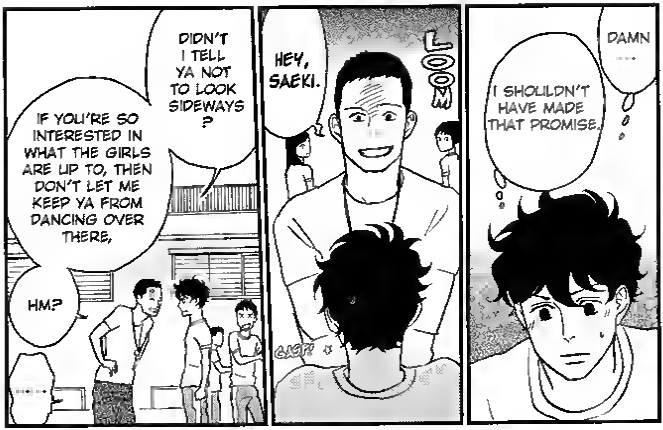
GIGGLE
GIGGLE


HEY!!





"I DON'T PLAN ON TELLING ANYONE"


DIDN'T I TELL YA NOT TO LOOK SIDEWAYS?
IF YOU'RE SO INTERESTED IN WHAT THE GIRLS ARE UP TO, THEN DON'T LET ME KEEP YA FROM DANCING OVER THERE,
HM?
HEY, SAEKI.
LOOM
GASP!
I SHOULDN'T HAVE MADE THAT PROMISE.
DAMN...

Why...?

is she thinking?
What the heck...

HEY.
YESTERDAY, I THOUGHT THERE MUST HAVE BEEN SOME BIG REASON BEHIND IT,
SO I PROMISED TO KEEP IT A SECRET.
DID YOU DO THAT ON PURPOSE?
DID YOU?
BUT WHAT'S THE POINT OF DOING THAT?
MAYBE YOU THINK IT'S OKAY,
BUT I CAN'T LET IT SLIDE.
YOU'RE
TAKING US ALL FOR FOOLS.
AND THAT
MEANS YOU'RE SAYING THE SAME ABOUT OWARA ITSELF.

I HATE ATTITUDES LIKE THAT.
I DESPISE YOU.
DOESN'T MATTER HOW GOOD OF A DANCER YOU ARE.
THAT'S ALL I WANTED TO SAY TO YOU.

WAIT!
EVEN IF I TELL YOU,
YOU PROBABLY WON'T BELIEVE ME.
UM...
IT...
WASN'T ON PURPOSE.
I WAS DANCING SERIOUSLY
...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I TRIED TO DO IT PROPERLY,
BUT I COULDN'T.
I WAS PROBABLY NERVOUS.
...
WHAT?

MY BODY JUST WENT STIFF.
IF YOU'RE GONNA LIE,
AT LEAST COME UP WITH A BETTER ONE.
I'M NOT LYING
YESTERDAY YOU DANCED AMAZING
HOW CAN YOU BE THAT STIFF UNLESS YOU DID IT ON PURPOSE?
BECAUSE... I THOUGHT NOBODY WAS LOOKING YESTERDAY!
TODAY
WAS THE FIRST TIME I'VE DANCED THE OWARA IN FRONT OF PEOPLE
WHAT DO YOU MEAN FIRST TIME...?
HUH?!
YOUR FIRST...?
NOD

I LEARNED THE OWARA FROM MY MOM WHEN I WAS A KID.
I PRACTICED INSIDE MY HOUSE EVERY SINGLE DAY.
IN TOKYO, NOBODY KNOWS ANYTHING ABOUT THE DANCE.
I'VE NEVER TOLD ANYONE THAT I WAS LEARNING IT.
TO ME THE OWARA IS LIKE MY MOTHER'S SECRET DANCE.
SO I'VE NEVER DANCED IN FRONT OF PEOPLE.
IT NEVER CROSSED MY MIND TO DO IT...

BUT YESTERDAY...
YOU SAID MY DANCING WAS OKAY.
SO I THOUGHT MAYBE I COULD TEST IT OUT IN FRONT OF OTHER PEOPLE.
I TRIED GIVING IT MY BEST SHOT.
AND THEN,
IT WENT SO BADLY ...
....
THAT SOUNDS ...

...REALLY SAD.
DANCING WHERE YOU CAN'T BE SEEN...
YOU...
MUST HAVE HAD TO PUT UP WITH IT FOR A VERY LONG TIME.
HUH ...?
I'M NOT PUTTING UP WITH ANYTHING.
PEOPLE WHO PUT UP WITH THINGS ...
...NEVER REALLY SAY THEY ARE
THAT'S WHAT MY LATE GRANDMOTHER USED TO SAY.

AH!
CRAP!
I TOTALLY FORGOT!
WE HAVE OUR USUAL MEETING TODAY.
SORRY, MINEGISHI. CAN YOU HOLD ONTO THESE FOR ME?
USUAL MEETING ...?

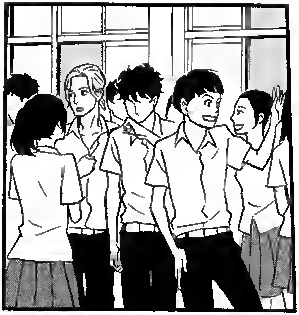
CLAP
CLAP
CHATTER
CHATTER
BANG
BANG
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

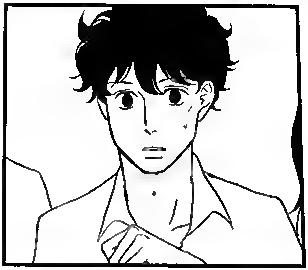
I WANNA GET CLOSE TO RYOU-SAMA!
SURE, SURE.
HEY, LET'S GO DOWN TO GET A BETTER LOOK.
OH! THEY'RE STARTING!

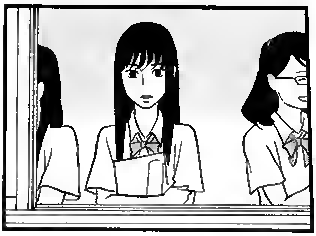
SWISH
♥Ryou sama!
Yo, pretty boys!

TH
P

OH
MINEGISHI-SAN, YOU'RE WATCHING TOO?
IS THIS YOUR FIRST TIME SEEING THE OWARA 5?
THEY'VE MADE A NAME FOR THEM-SELVES IN OUR SCHOOL.
Owara 5
THE FIVE OWARA-OBSESSED MORONS WILL SOMETIMES GATHER TOGETHER AND PERFORM LIKE THIS.
THE ACTUAL OWARA DANCES ARE PERFORMED SEPARATELY IN EACH OF THE ELEVEN TOWNS.
THESE BOYS ARE FROM DIFFERENT LOCATIONS,
SO WE GET TO SEE A MIXTURE OF ALL KINDS OF OWARA DANCES.
PLUS, THEY'RE ALL REALLY GOOD,
SO EVERYONE GATHERS TO WATCH.







MINEGISHI!

DID YOU LIKE MY DANCE?
HOW'D IT GO?
YOU WERE GREAT!!

Hey, I thought you were going into the girls' room, huh?
Hey, I thought you were going into the girls' room, huh?
Wha-at?
This kid got to share an umbrella with the cutest girl
No
You've got it all wrong
Hey, I thought you were going into the girls' room, huh?
WHAT'S WITH HER?
SHE BARELY TRANSFERRED HERE AND SHE'S TRYING TO STEAL ALL THE ATTENTION.
WHAT, MINEGISHI-SAN?
SHE'S A BIG, FAT LIAR.
WE ALL NEED TO WATCH OUT FOR HER.

Hatsumumu
TRANSLATOR

EDITOR(S)
Bryno & Stiletto
(and special thanks
to Minelauva)

octopus
PROOF READER

Hatsumumu
QUALITY CHECKER

VOLUME 1 CHAPTER 3

TSUKIKAGE BABY

BY KODAMA YUKI

BROUGHT TO YOU BY
stiletto heels
HTTP://WWW.STILETTOHEELSTEAM.COM

CHAPTER 3

HEY..
DON'T YOU THINK THAT GIRL'S STUCK UP?
OH, AND YOU KNOW WHAT?
HE'S ALL FRIENDLY WITH SAEKI.
WOULD ANY GIRL NORMALLY HIT IT OFF WITH BOYS SO SOON AFTER SHE JUST TRANSFERRED HERE?
I ALWAYS KNEW CITY GIRLS WERE..
SHH! SHE'S COMING!
MINEGI-SHI!
flinch!
DASH!
silence...

HAVE ANYTHING TO DO BEFORE GOING HOME TODAY?
NO...
OKAY, THERE'S A PLACE I WANT YOU TO SEE.
YOU KNOW WHERE THE TOWN'S COMMUNITY CENTER IS, RIGHT?
CAN YOU SWING BY THERE?
SEE YA!
.....

Sign reads Sawacho Community Center
HEY!
WELL, COME ON UP.
WAIT...
WHAT ARE YOU UP TO?
Rattle

SPECIAL TRAINING.
TO HELP YOU TO BE ABLE TO PERFORM IN FRONT OF A CROWD.
WHAT...
CALL ME A BUSYBODY IF YOU WANT.
BUT I CAN'T STAND TO SEE YOU...
DOING THAT STIFF DANCE..
IN FRONT OF EVERYONE ANY LONGER.
ARE YOU OKAY WITH PEOPLE...
LAUGHING AT YOU LIKE THIS?

.....
chrrrng

STRAM
STRAM
STRAM
BUT IT'S JUST HER SAME OLD ROBOT DANCE!
OH!
SAEKI'S SITTING WAY BACK...
MINEGISHI'S DOING THE OWARA.
REALLY?!
LEMME SEE.
CAN YOU SEE?
WHAT ARE THOSE TWO DOING?

OH, GOD! I CAN'T STOP LAUGHING WHEN I SEE HER.
KLANK
KLUNK
I'VE NEVER SEEN ANYONE MOVING SO WEIRD.
HOW DOES SHE DO IT?
LOOKS LIKE
SHE KNOWS THE CHOREOGRPAHY AND SHE'S TRYING TO WORK IT OUT.
HUH?
BEGINNERS CAN'T DANCE WELL BECAUSE THEY DON'T KNOW ALL THE MOVES.
IN MINEGISHI'S CASE, SHE MAY SEEM STIFF, BUT SHE'S GOT THE CHOREOGRAPHY DOWN.
THAT'S WHY IT LOOKS LIKE SHE'S MOVING WEIRD.
SHE WASN'T WATCHING MY MOVES THE OTHER DAY EITHER.
.. ...
I HEARD THIS...
WITH MY OWN EARS.

EVEN SAEKI SAID...
SHE WAS GOOD AT DANCING.
SHE CAN DANCE, BUT SHE'S *ACTING* LIKE SHE DOESN'T.
EVEN NOW, SHE'S JUST PRETENDING TO BE BAD.
.....
REALLY?
WHAT? NO WAY!
WHY WOULD SHE DO THAT?
WHO KNOWS?
WHATEVER THE REASON, SHE'S GETTING ON MY NERVES.
I'M DISAPPOINTED IN SAEKI TOO.

I'M NOT GONNA KEEP ON WATCHING HER RIDICULE US LIKE THAT.
I'M GOING HOME.
THINK IT'S TRUE...?
IF RIO SAYS IT IS, THEN IT IS.
WAIT.
SHE STOPPED DANCING.
WHERE'D SAEKI GO?
Rattle
KIUP
HEY,
PUT THIS ON AND TRY AGAIN

COME ON, PUT IT ON.
MAYBE YOU'LL FORGET YOU'RE BEING WATCHED AND BE ABLE TO DANCE.
IF YOU WEAR A *KASA, YOU'LL BE ABLE TO CONCENTRATE ON YOUR OWN MOVEMENTS.
* Conical hat made of woven straw
?

HUH?
DON'T TELL ME...
YOU DON'T KNOW HOW TO PUT IT ON...?
YEAH...
WAIT A SEC. HOW CAN YOU DANCE SO WELL AND NOT EVEN KNOW HOW TO WEAR A KASA?!
YEAH, SO? CAN'T HELP IT, OKAY? I NEVER HAD TO WEAR IT BECAUSE I PRACTICED AT HOME.
ALWAYS WANTED TO WEAR IT.
BUT..
I NEVER HAD THE CHANCE TO...PERFORM... IN FRONT OF PEOPLE.
I SEE.
...
SO THAT'S WHY.
COME HERE A SEC.
HUH?!

CLICK
CLICK
NAT-CHAN, YOUR PHONE!
WE'VE GOT OURSELVES A SCOOP!
OOH, I CAN FEEL THEIR CHEMIST-RY.
OH MY GOD. SO CLOSE!
CLICK

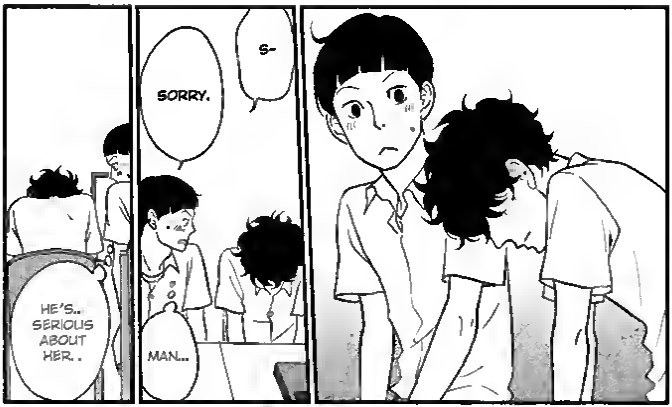
AFTER SHE TRIED...
DANCING WITH THE KASA ON...
JUST A LITTLE THOUGH.
..HER MOVEMENTS SEEMED MORE FLUID.
BUT IF SHE KEEPS AT IT,
THINGS MIGHT CHANGE.
The way she moved back then...
feels like a distant memory.

YANK
あがり症克服法
WHOA! HIKARU?!
NEVER EXPECTED TO FIND YOU IN THE LIBRARY
SORRY FOR GOING AGAINST EXPECTATIONS.
FORGET ABOUT THAT.
I SAW ON THE BULLETIN BOARD THAT YOU GOT YOURSELF INTO SOME TROUBLE.
I WAS SHOCKED SEEING IT JUST NOW.
...?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

Translation note: The title of the book Hikaru was about to pick up is Methods For Overcoming Stage Fright.

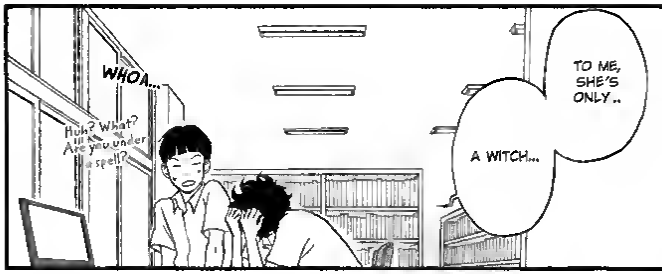
SEE?
THIS IS WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT.
SOMEBODY UPLOADED IT LAST NIGHT.
YOU CAN'T MAKE OUT THE FACE, BUT THAT RUMPLY HEAD CLEARLY BELONGS TO YOU.
IT'S TRENDING AMONG THE OWARA 5 FANS.
Wait a sec...
Who secretly took the picture?
WELL, IT'S A VIOLATION, SO IT'LL GET DELETED RIGHT AWAY.
BUT YOU'RE REALLY SOMETHING.
YOU WERE TELLING PEOPLE YOU WERE ONLY INTO OWARA AND DIDN'T NEED GIRLS.
BUT YOU WERE KISSING HER, WEREN'T YOU?
IT'S NOT...
WHAT YOU THINK, HINATA ...
THERE, THERE. DON'T BE SHY.
I'LL TEACH YOU ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT GIRLS.
TAP
TAP

I TOLD YOU, IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK!
GIRLS WHO ARE QUIET AND MYSTERIOUS WITH THICK EYEBROWS LIKE HER...
...MAY SEEM TO HAVE THEIR GUARD UP.
BUT WHEN THEY'RE IN LOVE, THEY GO STRAIGHT FOR WHAT THEY WANT.
I BET SHE CAN BE PRETTY BOLD.
SO SHE'S PERFECT FOR A VIRGIN LIKE YOU...
SHUT UP!


HE'S.. SERIOUS ABOUT HER.
MAN...
SORRY.
S-

My head was full of Owara
That's right.

That's why I wanted to help her practice.
She's not to be taken lightly
is trying to seduce my uncle.
this girl
But now that I've thought it through,


WHOA...
Huh? What? Are you under a spell?
A WITCH...
TO ME, SHE'S ONLY..

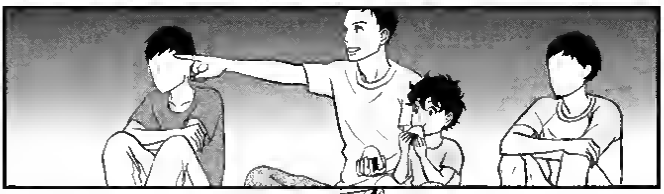
"I DON'T WANNA! I WANNA WATCH THE OLDER BOYS PRACTICE SOME MORE."
"HEY, NOW, HIKARU. IT'S TIME FOR YOU TO GO HOME."
"ALL THE KIDS YOUR AGE HAVE GONE HOME LONG AGO."

I like the way he looked...

as he said that to me with a chuckle.

"YOU LOVE IT TOO, DON'T YOU? "

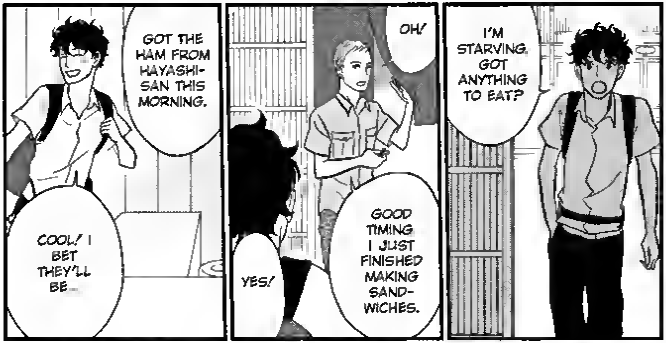
"BOY, I WONDER WHO IT IS YOU TAKE AFTER, EH?"

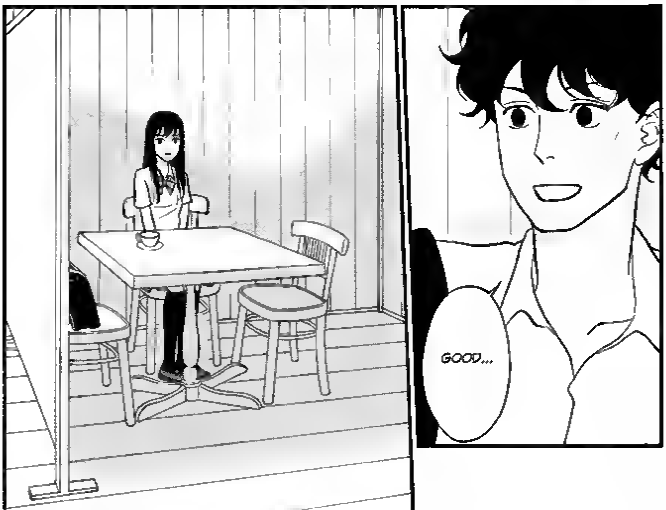


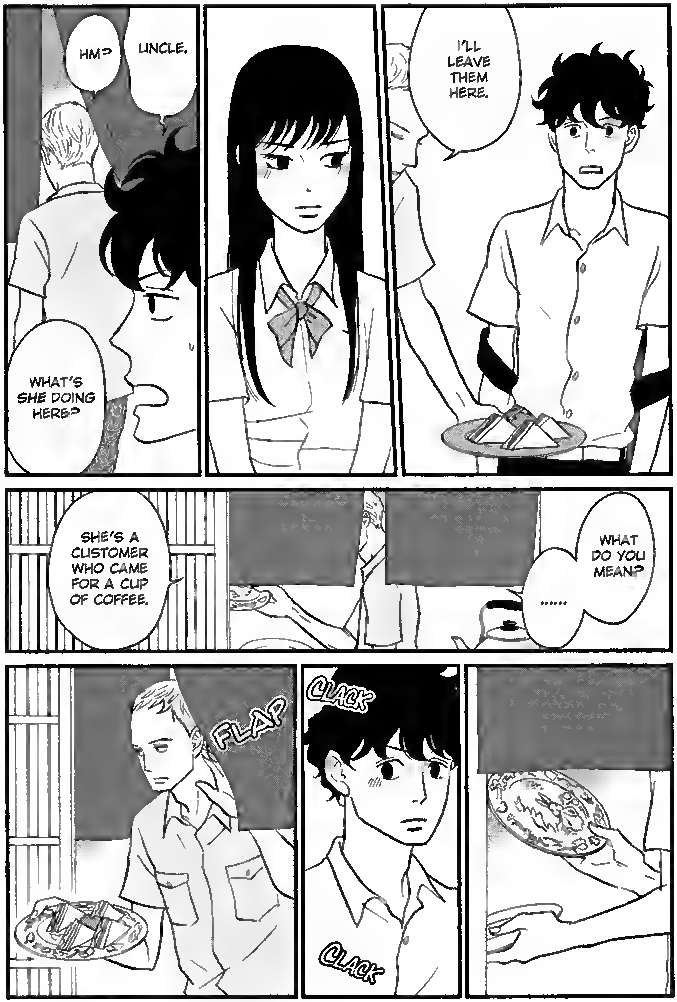
How can I not be interested in Minegishi's dancing...

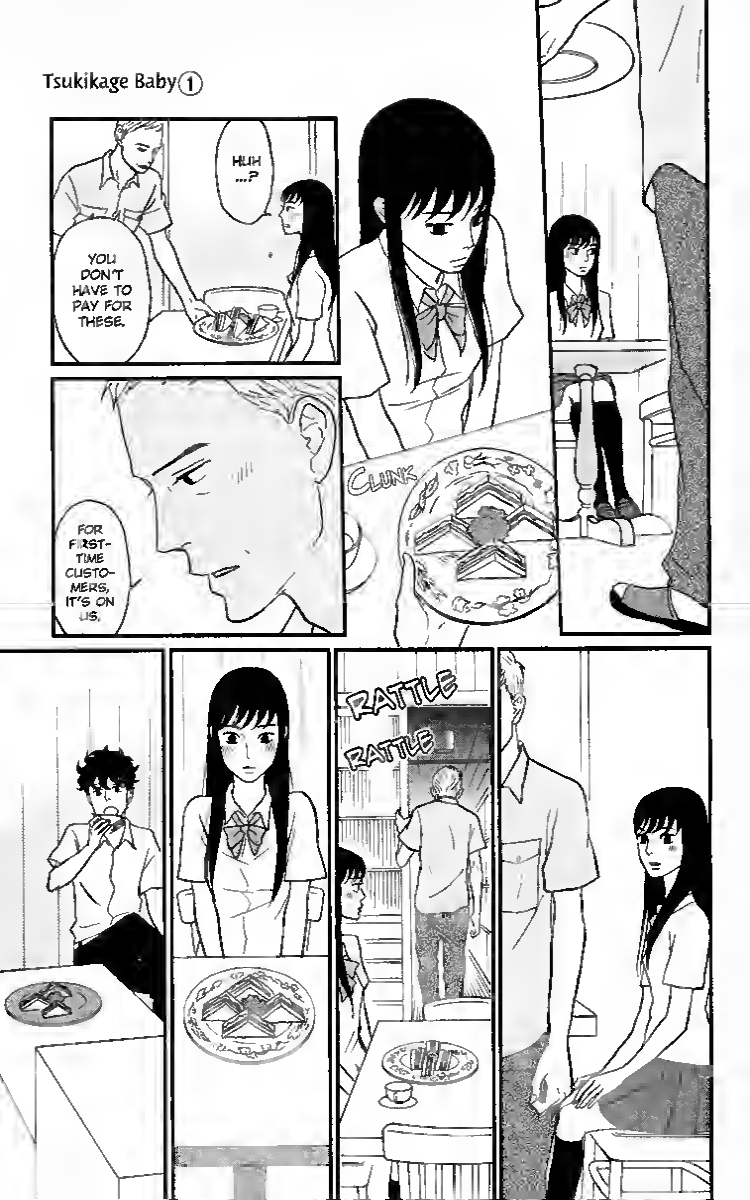
when I've been so heavily influenced by him?

UNCLE?
That's all there is to it.
I'm passionate about Owara and I care about my uncle.


GOT THE HAM FROM HAYASHI-SAN THIS MORNING.
COOL! I BET THEY'LL BE...
OH!
YES!
GOOD TIMING I JUST FINISHED MAKING SAND-WICHES.
I'M STARVING. GOT ANYTHING TO EAT?


GOOD...


HM?
UNCLE.
I'LL LEAVE THEM HERE.
WHAT'S SHE DOING HERE?
SHE'S A CUSTOMER WHO CAME FOR A CUP OF COFFEE.
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
.....
FLAP
CLACK
CLACK


HUH ...?
YOU DON'T HAVE TO PAY FOR THESE.
FOR FIRST-TIME CUSTOMERS, IT'S ON US.
CLUNK
RATTLE
RATTLE

stare
WHAT'S HER PROBLEM?
munch munch
STARE
SHE KEEPS STARING AT IT.
ISN'T SHE GONNA EAT IT?
OH, MY!
I SMELL COFFEE.
KOIKE-SAN?♪
MMGH!
UM.
NO-
IS KOIKE-SAN HERE?!

.....
OH...
YES, THAT'S RIGHT.
YOU'RE MUNOMURA'S DAUGHTER, RIGHT?
I HEARD YOU MOVED HERE FROM TOKYO.
WELL, MAKE YOURSELF...
AT HOME.
HAHAHA!
THE REGULAR PATRONS AT THIS CAFE ARE OLD FOLKS.
MADE MY HEART JUMP TO SEE A YOUNG LADY SITTING IN THE BACK.

IT'S NOT OFTEN YOU GET TO SEE...
ONE WHO COMES ON HER OWN.
HIKARU-CHAN, MAY I HAVE THE BILL?
WHAT HAPPENED TO SAEKI-SAN?
HE MIGHT BE IN THE BATHROOM.
NEED SOME-THING?
I-IT'S NOTHING.
OK.
WELL, TELL HIM I SAID HELLO
CHIRPING CHIRPING
GOODNESS, KOIKE-SAN, YOU'RE HERE?
I SMELLED COFFEE AND PEEKED IN THE BACK THINKING IT WAS YOU.
WELL, I WAS THERE A WHILE AGO.
BUT ONCE THAT GIRL CAME, HE SUDDENLY STOPPED TALKING.
IT FELT AWKWARD, SO I LEFT.

WHAT? WHAT HAPPENED EXACTLY?
I'M NOT SURE HOW TO EXPLAIN IT,
BUT IT FELT LIKE THERE WAS SOMETHING GOING ON BETWEEN HER AND SAEKI-SAN.
THEY SEEMED LIKE LOVERS.
OH, IT CAN'T BE!
SHE'S ONLY IN HIGH SCHOOL!
WOULD HE REALLY?!
SHH! NOT SO LOUD.
WELL, HE'S SINGLE, ISN'T HE?
AND SHE HAS THIS QUALITY ABOUT HER...
HUGS
HUGS
HUGS
This is bad.

I have to do something about it.
People are already starting to spread strange rumors.
I HAVE TO MAKE SURE SHE STOPS COMING.
IT'S ALL BECAUSE SHE CAME TO HIS CAFE.
HEY, MINE-GISHI.
CAN YOU...
stare
She still hasn't
taken a bite yet?!

CHEW
CHEW
CHEW
MMGH.
GRIP

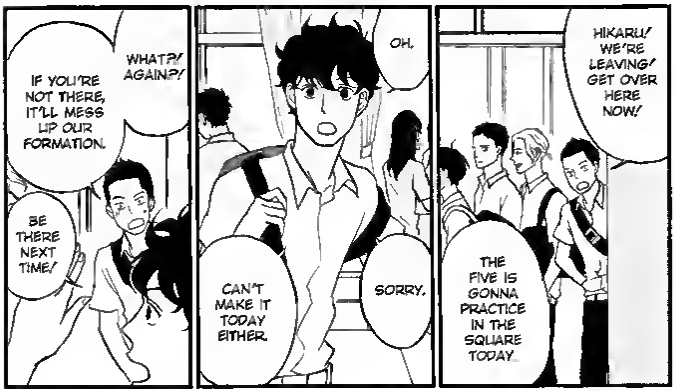
"When you come here,
people give Uncle Madoka weird looks."
"Please don't come to the cafe anymore."
I know that's what I need to tell her, but...

SORRY FOR MAKING YOU WAIT ON CUSTOMERS.
YOU TOOK SO LONG IN THE BATH-ROOM.
MINEGISHI ALREADY LEFT.
OH, YEAH.
I wasn't using the bathroom.
SHE ONLY TOOK A BITE OF HER SANDWICH.

It know it's not right, but

And she did it so tenderly.
SHE WRAPPED UP THE REST AND TOOK IT HOME.
HUH? WHY?
DUNNO.
Uncle Madoka...
OR WAS THERE SOMETHING IN THERE SHE DIDN'T LIKE?
MAYBE SHE WASN'T FEELING HUNGRY..
I had never seen before in my life.
Just a moment ago, I witnessed something...

A young woman...
who is truly in love...


HIKARU! WE'RE LEAVING! GET OVER HERE NOW!
THE FIVE IS GONNA PRACTICE IN THE SQUARE TODAY.
OH.
SORRY.
CAN'T MAKE IT TODAY EITHER.
WHAT?! AGAIN?!
IF YOU'RE NOT THERE, IT'LL MESS UP OUR FORMATION.
BE THERE NEXT TIME!

WANNA WALK HOME TOGETHER?
MINE-GISHI.
Next time We can't do it with out the you
WHAT...
YANK.
HEY!

HEY...
WAIT!
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU?!
TELL ME.
WHAT'S YOUR FIRST NAME?
.....
HOTA-RUKO.
THEN I'LL CALL YOU HOTARUKO.
YOU CAN CALL ME HIKARU.
LET'S ACT LIKE WE'RE DATING.
THEN, EVERYTHING WILL BE OKAY.

STARTING TODAY,
I'LL BE YOUR COVER.
WHAT?
RUSTLE
RUSTLE